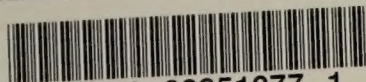


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# THE FAMINE IN SOVIET RUSSIA 1919-1923

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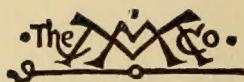






THE FAMINE  
IN SOVIET RUSSIA

1919-1923



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# THE FAMINE IN SOVIET RUSSIA

1919-1923

THE OPERATIONS OF THE  
AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

BY

H. H. FISHER

*Chief of the Historical Department, the American Relief Administration. Lecturer in History, Stanford University.*

New York

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1927

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## PREFACE

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This book is the story of American aid to Russia through the agency of the American Relief Administration during the Great Famine of 1921-1922. Except as otherwise noted it is based on materials in the A.R.A. archives. Chapters I-XVI constitute the narrative of events from the first attempt of the A.R.A. to give relief to Russia in 1919 to the completion of its work in July 1923. The succeeding chapters describe special aspects of the relief activities with a brief summary of the work of a number of other American organizations which were affiliated with the A.R.A. and contributed much to the success of the undertaking. No attempt has been made to give a detailed account of the considerable activities of other foreign relief bodies or of the Russian Soviet Government. This necessary exclusion is not due, it is perhaps unnecessary to say, to any desire to minimize the devoted work of a large number of men and women who were unselfishly engaged in the service of the Russian people. Chapter XXI summarizes the causes that combined to make the famine of 1921-22 vastly more devastating than previous crop failures which have brought death and misery so often to the Russian people.

I am under heavy obligation to the officers of the A.R.A. for the system of records which they established, to the staff for their coöperation in the preparation of the voluminous materials which constitute the documentary basis of this work, and particularly to Mr. Sidney Brooks and Mr. John R. Ellington and the other members of the Historical Department for their generous collaboration. Especially I am indebted to Miss Suda L. Bane, the Librarian of the A.R.A., for invaluable aid in all stages of the preparation of this book, and to my wife, Helen Dwight Fisher, in the revision of the manuscript and the correction of the proof.

Messrs. Edgar Rickard, George Barr Baker, Perrin C. Galpin, Sidney Brooks, George I. Gay and Professors Frank

A. Golder and Lincoln Hutchinson have been kind enough to read the manuscript in whole or in part and I am grateful for the suggestions which they have made. I have also to thank the officials of the Hoover War Library at Stanford University for the privilege of using the unique collection of manuscript and printed materials relative to the World War, the Russian Revolution and the Reconstruction Period in that Library. The map of Soviet Russia used as the frontispiece is reproduced from the Literary Digest with the kind permission of Messrs. Funk and Wagnalls. The other maps and charts in the volume are the work of Mr. William H. Meserole.

H. H. FISHER.



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# BOOK I





# THE FAMINE IN SOVIET RUSSIA

## CHAPTER I

### RUSSIAN RELIEF NEGOTIATIONS OF 1919

WHEN the diplomatic representatives of the western powers withdrew from Russia at the end of 1918, no formal declaration of war followed. There was no call to arms, no formal blockade, none of the pomp and spectacle of the clash of nations. Yet never, perhaps, even in the very heat of the World War did the searing flames of hate blaze with more cruel intensity; seldom have men fought with such relentless, savage fury; never has a civilized land been more decisively severed from intercourse with the world. Men explain these things divergently, according to their lights. Fundamentally the struggle was, on one hand, to feed and spread the fires of social revolution; on the other, to stamp them out; and so, when from exhaustion the fighting abated with neither side having achieved its aims, enmity smouldered and diplomatic intercourse was not resumed.

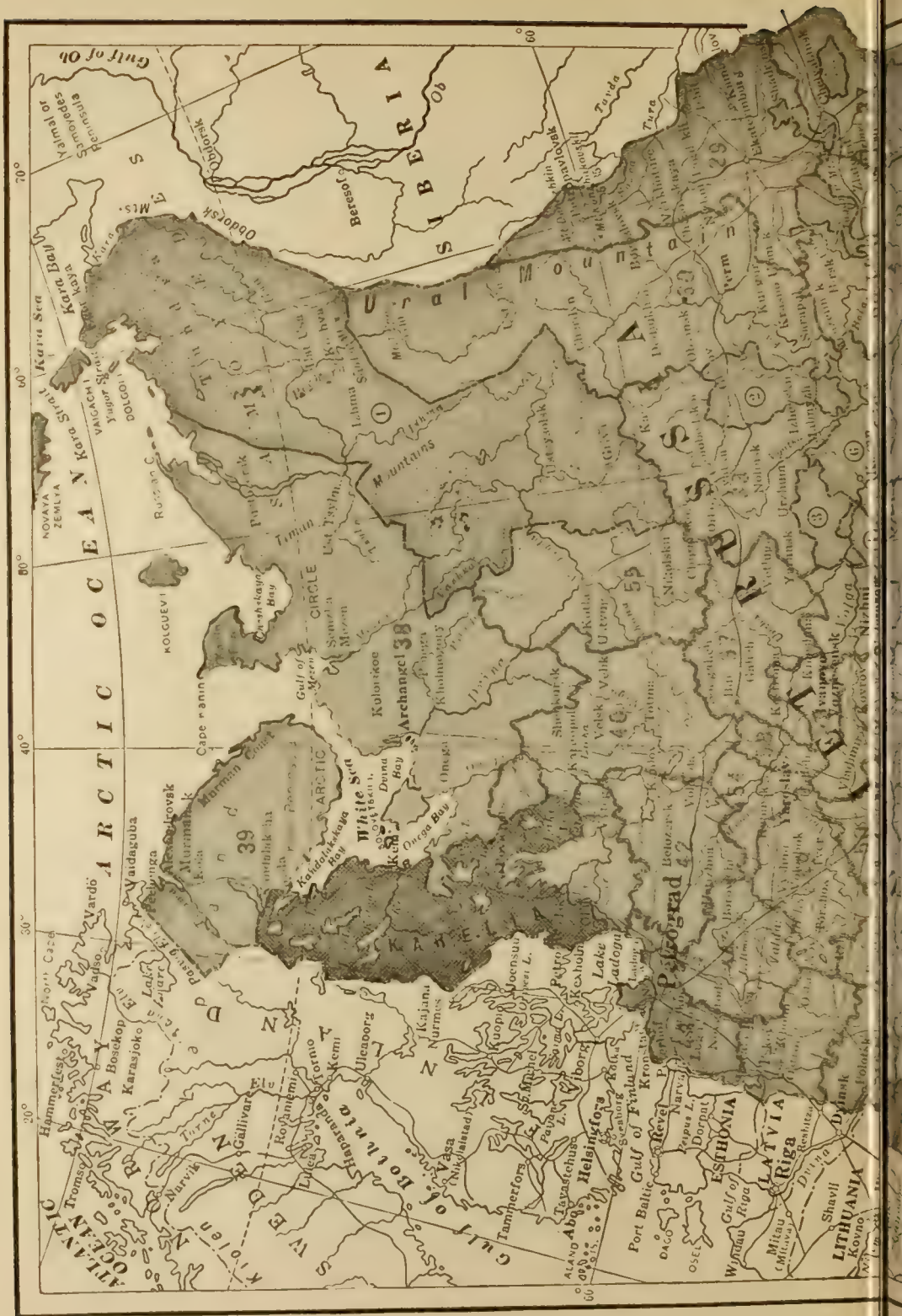
The definiteness of the severance, the completeness of Russia's ostracism was due not solely to the measures of either the Bolsheviks or their opponents, but to a combination of the efforts of both. For a great majority of those on both sides of the line it was as if the fire curtain in a theatre had been lowered and one heard of what was happening on the other side fragmentarily from the gossip of the misinformed. Early in 1921 the curtain lifted a little, disclosing the setting of a tragedy of famine and pestilence as awful in its possibilities as the tragedy of war just ended. The call for help came to a world still hostile, still weak from its wounds and still absorbed in trying to cure them. The nations responded as they could. Here we are concerned with America's answer.

Of the great powers involved in the war, the United States had suffered least, and the resilience of her people made recovery faster. She had, however, in staving off the famine in Central Europe in post-war years given most, and when the Russian call came, she was suffering belatedly many of those ills which had afflicted Western Europe since the struggle ended. Economic disturbances, serious and widespread in their effects, inevitably tightened the purse strings of generous supporters of foreign relief and recalled their attention to distress at home. A great "national collection," hopefully described as the last of a long series, had just been concluded for the support of the children of Central Europe. As for Russia itself, a series of events which culminated in sensational arrests and deportations focussed the attention of the country upon the breach that existed between it and the Communist régime and on the alleged menace to American institutions flowing from the activities of that régime. Bolshevism and the whole Soviet Russian question, which had already passed the most acute stage of controversy in Europe, were with us at the very peak of violence. Thus at no other time, it seems, would a call for aid from Russia have been likely to be so unfavorably received as at the very moment it was made.

But the call was answered. Speaking strictly as the Chairman of the American Relief Administration but actually representing many others whose vision penetrated the dust of controversy, Herbert Hoover offered the aid of himself, his associates and the resources of the A. R. A. to the Russian people. Though made by a private individual in a private capacity, this offer, because of Hoover's proved and trusted leadership in foreign relief, committed America to a project bristling with difficulties. Hoover was by no means unaware of them. He recognized the physical difficulties that stood in the way of the effective delivery of relief; he realized that vast sums, to be obtained with difficulty, would be needed; he saw the scorching controversial complications which this enterprise, carried on in an atmosphere of hostility and suspicion, would involve. Hoover had met the Russian relief problem before. He knew its potentialities. But, without illusions, he tackled it once more.













## THE RUSSIAN PROBLEM AT THE PEACE CONFERENCE

In the spring of 1919 Mr. Hoover was in Paris. As the principal executive of the Supreme Economic Council of the Allied and Associated Powers, as United States Food Administrator and Chairman of the American Relief Administration, he was initiating and directing the food supply to the larger part of Europe and measures of relief and reconstruction to a wide belt of territory that stretched across Central and Eastern Europe from the Baltic to the Caspian Sea. The immediate object of these measures was to save the millions of hungry from starvation; the secondary and equally important object was to restore peace and the conditions of production in lands where racial, religious, social hatreds, like destructive munitions left over from the war, kept all Europe agitated with recurrent explosions. Within this relief belt the stream of food began gradually to expel the panic fear of hunger; trade and commerce began hesitatingly to revive; and men began to turn from strife to peace.<sup>1</sup> But beyond this belt there was a ring of savage little wars that set a limit to relief and constantly threatened even the small gains of peace so laboriously won.

Among the heavy problems of the Paris peacemakers, that of Russia was among the most difficult and elusive. Most of the other questions of like importance were met and disposed of one way or another, but the Russian question, after three attempts to grapple with it, was left to solve itself. The first of these attempts was brought forward by Prime Minister Lloyd George on January 16, 1919, and sponsored by President Wilson in a proclamation of January 22. At the meeting at the Quai d'Orsay on the 16th, Lloyd George gave an amaz-

<sup>1</sup> For descriptions and estimates of the work of the A.R.A. in 1919-1923 see: Herbert Hoover, *The Economic Administration During the Armistice*, in E. M. House and Charles Seymour's *What Really Happened at Paris*, New York, 1921. American Relief Administration *Bulletins*. Suzanne Ferrière, *Les Etats-Unis au secours de l'Europe 1918-1923*, Union Internationale de Secours Aux Enfants, Genève, 1923. Supreme Economic Council; Documents of the Food Section, 1919. J. M. Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, 273-4, New York, 1920. Sidney Brooks, *America and Germany*. New York, 1925. H. Wilson Harris, *The Peace in the Making*, 179-190, London, 1919.

ingly acute analysis of the Russian problem.<sup>2</sup> He outlined three possible policies. (1) Military intervention, which was impossible because British or any other Allied troops would mutiny. (Later he declared, perhaps a little rashly, that if a military enterprise were started against the Bolsheviks, there would be a Soviet in London). (2) A *cordon sanitaire*, which was unthinkable because it would be not a health cordon, but a death cordon, and the very people whom the Allies wished to save would be the first to die. (3) The British proposal, to invite representatives of all the warring factions to Paris to give an account of themselves. Clemenceau vetoed Paris as a meeting place, and so when the Wilson proclamation came forth, it named, instead, the Island of Prinkipo in the Sea of Marmora, a safely remote spot, where the delegates were to assemble on February 15. The proposal came to nothing. The principal anti-Bolshevik governments would have nothing to do with it; the Bolsheviks made conditions—but accepted; while among the Allies the advocates of intervention or the *cordon sanitaire* raised such an opposition that the sponsors were compelled to let the plan lapse.<sup>3</sup> The state of French official opinion as well as of influential public opinion in other quarters is well shown by a note from Pichon published at about this time.<sup>4</sup> The French Foreign Secretary wrote in part:

“The criminal régime of the Bolsheviks, which represents in no degree a democratic government, or even any possibility of government, since it leans entirely upon the basest passions, on anarchic oppression, on the negation of all the principles of public and private justice, cannot pretend to be recognized as a regular government.

“If the Allies had the weakness or the imprudence to act in

<sup>2</sup> A record of this meeting is in *Notes on Conversations Held in the Office of M. Pichon at the Quai d'Orsay, on January 16, 1919*, a Peace Conference Document, a copy of which is in the Hoover War Library. An account of this affair, based on this and similar sources is given in H. W. V. Temperley, *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, London, 1924, VI, 312-314.

<sup>3</sup> Many of the documents bearing on this incident are to be found in *Russian-American Relations*, New York, 1920. Documents 129, 130, 131, 132, 133.

<sup>4</sup> This note, dated December 5, 1918, when the British plan was first mooted, was published by *L'Humanité*, the Paris Socialist daily, on January 11, 1919. The object of publication was to reveal Pichon's “brutal refusal” and to rally opinion to support the British plan. It seems to have had the opposite effect.

this manner, they would contradict in the first place the principles of justice and of right which are the bulwark of their power and honor, and would give to Bolshevik propaganda in the world strength and power to expand, from which the Allies would run the risk of being the first victims. The French Government, as far as it is concerned, will enter into no pact with the crime. . . .

"As to the dangers of the menace from the Red Army we should not cease to furnish them (the non-Bolshevik Russians) with arms, money and even military assistance compatible with our means. The method and the patience, combined with the impossibility of the duration of a régime without a regular organization for revictualling, for transportation, for order, for credit, etc., will result finally in ending interior Russian anarchy which can exist for a certain time, but is in no circumstances capable of ultimate triumph, and we continue absolutely to refuse it all recognition and to treat it as an enemy."

The failure of the Prinkipo scheme and of the second attempt, the Bullitt pseudo-secret mission,<sup>5</sup> showed the difficulties that attended a purely political approach to the Russian question, and by arousing and consolidating anti-Bolshevik opinion made more difficult any subsequent attempt. Yet people still starved in Russian cities, and men still killed each other in futile warfare. Hoover recalled the case of Belgium in 1914, when a way had been found through the political and military impasse. There the civilian population, seemingly cut off from the hope of outside aid, had been saved through the efforts of a neutral commission which approached the problem by an humanitarian instead of a political route. He decided to approach the Russian problem by a similar road. Before telling of the steps he took, it is advisable to glance at the condition of the people whom Hoover and his associates hoped to aid.

<sup>5</sup> With the approval of Col. House, Wm. C. Bullitt, accompanied by Lincoln Steffens and Capt. W. W. Pettit went on February 22, 1919, to Russia to get from the Soviets a statement of the terms on which they were ready to stop fighting. This mission was known to the British, but an effort was made to keep it from the other Allies. The statement which Bullitt secured was never presented to the Peace Conference. W. C. Bullitt, *The Bullitt Mission to Russia*, New York, 1919.



## THE RUSSIAN SCENE, 1918-1919

The food crisis in Russian cities did not, of course, originate with the October Revolution. It began, as a matter of fact, within a few months after the declaration of war in 1914, when the Imperial officials, who had counted on a fall in bread prices as a result of the discontinuation of exports, were shocked to discover that prices were going up. Moreover, almost immediately the government itself began to have difficulties in supplying food and fodder to the army. This difficulty was not due to a food shortage in the country, but to corruption, speculation, finance and transport troubles, and general administrative incompetence. The hunger became a menacing reality to the poor in Petrograd and Moscow in 1916, and the subject of polite conversation in the salons of people who were spending for food, as for everything else, with scandalous extravagance. In the halls of the Duma, it was debated exhaustively and helped to swell the sounding stream of talk. But with food supply, as with the other vital weaknesses that the test of war revealed, the bureaucrats lacked the capacity to take effective remedial action. Half-hearted measures, threats, and compromises served merely to increase corruption and to accelerate the rise of prices. Towards the end of 1916, however, the financial difficulties of the Imperial Treasury forced the government to take drastic steps, first in the direction of price-fixing in food, and ultimately in an attempt to compel the peasants to deliver grain to the government. This contributed no little to the impetus of the agrarian revolution, for the peasants resented bitterly this stringent regulation of the prices of their produce, while the producers of manufactured commodities indulged in an orgy of profiteering. The Imperial Government, having failed to establish those controls of food and other necessities adopted elsewhere, collapsed at the very beginning of the critical year 1917, which was marked in other belligerent lands by mutinies, riots or intense political agitation.

The March Revolution which toppled the Czar from his throne began with women and workmen rioting for "bread and herrings." Then came strikes inspired not by political ideals, but by the shortage of bread. The movement became political



only after the government in panic attempted to dissolve the Duma, which then became identified with the popular movement. The Provisional Government inherited not only the food problem, but along with it the incapacity of its predecessor to handle it. The state food monopoly which was established, unaccompanied by any definite action on the land problem or effective control of industrial prices, merely contributed to the rapidly spreading agrarian unrest; the looting and parcelling out of landlords' estates became increasingly frequent; and the scenes of 1905 described by Witte as "the senseless turmoil known as the Revolution," were widely re-enacted. In fact the peasant revolution, in suspense since 1905, was already under way even before the Bolsheviks had pushed their way to power in Petrograd.

The Bolshevik Revolution of October 25, 1917,<sup>6</sup> unlike its predecessor, was not a popular uprising but a coup d'état planned and executed by the grimly competent Bolshevik leaders. Except at a few places where sanguinary fighting occurred, the life of the city was little disturbed by this event. In the theatres crowds of people, unconscious of the tragic drama being enacted at the Winter Palace and in the Morskaia, diverted themselves according to their taste with the music of "Eugène Onegin," with the laughs and thrills of "The Vine Leaf" and "Everlasting Love," or with the antics of the clowns and the hair-raising exploits of the lady acrobats at the Ciniselli Circus.

Lenin and his associates, more determined and abler men than their predecessors in power, could not solve the food problem of the cities. They made no attempt to clear the clogged channels of trade between town and country; they abolished these institutions of capitalism, made private trading illegal, and set up a new system with the state as a benevolent, economic octopus to supply with its multiple arms the just needs of all. But the food supply of the cities grew more scant. If they could not increase the amount, the Bolsheviks could control its distribution, and thus food became a weapon to compel support or break down opposition. But control of a di-

<sup>6</sup>This date is "old style." The October Revolution occurred according to our calendar on November 7.

minishing supply was insufficient, and in 1918 the pinch of hunger began to cause disaffection among the privileged groups on whose support Bolshevik power rested. Only by the drastic measures of confiscation did the Revolutionary Government escape the fate of the Czarist bureaucracy.<sup>7</sup>

Harsh requisition kept the Bolsheviks in the Kremlin; it did not banish hunger from the cities. During the period of which we write the towns were not in the strict sense of the word in the grip of famine. There was food, such as it was, to be had from government depots, if one were of the privileged groups, or to be bought illegally, if one had the means. But lacking means and beyond the pale of Bolshevik favor was a large section of the population of the middle class,—tradesmen, clerks, teachers, writers, lawyers, architects, former members of the government services, officers, engineers, in general those whose talents the new Russia needed,—who were slowly dying from hunger, cold and disease. The extent of the food shortage in Russia at this time may have been exaggerated by contemporary reports, but the intensity of misery and starvation, of terror, organized or unorganized, could not be overdrawn. "Everybody," wrote Arthur Ransome, one of the most sympathetic and intelligent of the foreign observers of the revolution, "in Moscow, as in Petrograd, is both hungry and cold." Kamenev declared in Ransome's presence, that, whereas a hundred cars of food should be arriving in Moscow daily to make any improvement in the situation, seldom more than twenty were received.<sup>8</sup> These were days of dull horror, of grim, ghastly tragedy that clutched and strangled every impulse but the most primitive, which men shared with the dogs that fought over the carcasses of animals and the refuse piled in the streets.

#### BOLSHEVISM AT HOME AND ABROAD

The political and military changes of the latter part of 1918 did not ease the Russian economic situation, but they did harden both Reds and Whites against compromise. The es-

<sup>7</sup> The food policy of the Soviet Government during this period, its effect on production, and its relation to the famine of 1921-1922 are discussed more fully in Chapter XXI, "The Causes of the Famine."

<sup>8</sup> Arthur Ransome, *Russia in 1919*, 66, 194; New York, 1919.

establishment of their ascendancy at home and the progress of their "comrades" abroad encouraged the Bolsheviks to hope for better things. The Social Revolutionists, the only party capable of challenging the Bolshevik control of the Soviets, were tricked and outmanoeuvred in the Fifth All Russian Congress of Soviets in July, 1918, and finally smashed and driven underground when the Bolsheviks squashed their coup d'état in Moscow. On September 7 (1918) the Terror began and the last threatening opposition to the dictatorship, that had seethed underground in the capital and elsewhere, was drowned in blood. On the military fronts, the Red Armies of Trotzky more than held their ground. The end of the war in Europe brought the collapse of German pressure. Krasnov, after nearly reaching Moscow, saw his army melt under him; the Czecho-Slovaks, after seizing Kazan, fell back and began their long trek across Siberia to the Pacific; and finally, peasant revolts in three Provinces, though not stamped out, were kept from spreading to other regions. In Western Europe, moreover, the hopes of the Russian Communists for world revolution had something to feed upon. The Spartacist disturbances broke out in Northern Germany in January (1919). The régime of Kurt Eisner in Bavaria was followed in February by the establishment of Soviets in Munich. Of still greater significance to the watchers in the Kremlin, in March, the Karolyi Government of Hungary, unable to stand between the demands of Hungarian nationalism and the fumbling policy of the Allies, quietly expired. In its place came the Communists under Bela Kun, who had recently left Moscow to spread the gospel of Bolshevism in the Balkans, after a course of training as a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party during the Red Terror. To one group of Communists, which, incidentally, did not include Lenin, the time had come to throw the Red Army across the Dniester and join in the red rising of the peasants of Rumania, Bulgaria, and the southern Slavs. Even in Great Britain the Bolshevik romanticists saw signs of a red dawn. Reports told hopefully of the miners' demands that threatened to break the most resilient of Prime Ministers, of British troops rioting for demobilization, and of labor troubles in



Belfast that seemed likely to develop into something worse.<sup>9</sup>

These social disturbances strengthened the Communists against compromise with rulers of the western world, who, there seemed good reason to hope, might soon be replaced by others more amenable to Bolshevik ideas. The same events were used in the west to prove that if civilization were to be saved, Bolshevism must be stamped out at its source, the Soviet Government utterly destroyed. Hope that this was about to be consummated was reborn every week. By the time the Prinkipo plan had been buried and the Bullitt mission publicly disowned by Lloyd George, the hopes of the Whites began to revive. The several anti-Bolshevik movements on the periphery of Russia took on a new lease of life. Kolchak, who, by a coup d'état not unworthy of the Bolsheviks, had become dictator of the Siberian Government, began to skirmish with the Red troops in the east, on the front formerly held by Czecho-Slovaks; General Denikin and the Cossacks, newly supplied with munitions from the Allies, were putting more vigor into their operations in the Kuban and the region of the Don; while in the far north on the shores of the White Sea, the forces of the Archangel White Government, supported by Allied troops, waged a half-hearted war with the Reds in that vicinity. In the Baltic a heterogeneous combination of Germans, Russians, Estonians, Letts, and Finns, were struggling with local Bolshevik forces—and sometimes with each other—trying to effect self-determination. In the Western Ukraine, the Germans having withdrawn, the Bolshevik forces were engaged with various bands, some representing the Ukrainian nationalist movement, and others, like those of Makhno and Grigoriev, anarchists with a flair for banditry, fighting indiscriminately against Reds, Whites, Rumanians, Poles, and among themselves.

#### THE HOOVER PLAN (1919)

The bitter suffering in the famished Russian cities and the ghastly toll of the civil wars that decided nothing were not

<sup>9</sup> M. P. Price, *My Reminiscences of the Russian Revolution*, 362-3 and 335-7. London, 1921. The author, correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, was in intimate touch with Communist leaders.



the only considerations that persuaded Hoover to put forward his plan at this time. He perceived that the failure of the Prinkipo conference would be followed by a recrudescence of the interventionist movement, a new effort to push more Allied and American troops into Russia. He opposed such a policy as inconsistent with American ideals and traditions, and as unlikely to solve the question of Bolshevism, but only to prolong the period of slaughter. The plan of a neutral commission would, as he saw it, not only feed the hungry in Russia, but serve as an alternative to the continuation or extension of intervention.

He presented his plan to President Wilson on March 28, 1919, in a memorandum in which he set forth his own views as to the relation of America to Bolshevism and its manifestations. In discussing the general developments of Bolshevism Hoover wrote:

"It simply cannot be denied that this swinging of the social pendulum from the tyranny of the extreme right to the tyranny of the extreme left is based on a foundation of real social grievance. The tyranny of the reactionaries in Eastern and Central Europe for generations before the War, and the suffering of their common people is but a commonplace to every social student. This situation was thrown into bold relief by the war and the breakdown of these reactionary tyrannies. After fighting actually stopped on the various fronts, the famine which followed has further silhouetted the gulf between the lower and upper classes. The poor were starved and driven mad in the presence of extravagance and waste.

"It is to be noticed that the Bolshevik ascendancy, or even their strong attempts so far, are confined to areas of former reactionary tyranny. Their courses represent the not unnatural violence of a mass of ignorant humanity, who themselves have learned in grief of tyranny and violence over generations. Our people, who enjoy so great liberty and general comfort, cannot fail to sympathize to some degree with these blind gropings for better social conditions. If former revolutions in ignorant masses are any guide, the pendulum will yet swing back to some moderate position when bitter experience has taught the economic and social follies of present obsessions.

No greater fortune can come to the world than that these foolish ideas should have an opportunity somewhere of bankrupting themselves. . . . The Bolshevik's land of illusion is that he can perfect these human qualities by destroying the basic processes of production and distribution, instead of devoting himself to securing a better application of the collective surplus." <sup>10</sup>

In accounting for this success of Bolshevik agitation in certain countries, Hoover pointed out that, while the Bolsheviks themselves were in a minority, and had established their power by resorting to terror and bloodshed and by an appeal to criminal instincts, the Bolshevik agitator had spread his influence, for "enveloping into his doctrine the cry of the helpless and the downtrodden, he has embraced a large degree of emotionalism and has thereby given an impulse to his propaganda comparable only to the impulse of large spiritual movements." Bolshevik propaganda was most effective in countries in which there had been the greatest amount of suffering, ignorance, and oppression. "Where the gulf between the middle classes and the lower classes is large and where the lower classes have been kept in ignorance and distress, this propaganda will be fatal and do violence to normal democratic development. For these reasons, I have no fear of it in the United States, and my fears as to other countries would be gauged by the above criticism. It is possible that the Soviet type of government might take hold in some other countries as a primitive form of democracy, but its virulence will be tempered by their previous degree of political subversion."

Turning to the American relation to the manifestations of Bolshevism, Mr. Hoover wrote:

"There remains in my mind one more point to be examined, that is, as to whether the Bolshevik centers now stirred by great emotional hopes will not undertake large military crusades in an attempt to impose their doctrines on other defenseless people. This is a point on which my mind is divided with the evidence in hand, and it seems to me that the whole treatment of the problem must revolve on the determination of

<sup>10</sup> This and all other documents quoted in the text, unless otherwise noted, are from the Archives of the American Relief Administration.

this one question. If this spirit is inherent in their doctrine, it appears to me that we must disregard all other questions and be prepared to fight, for exactly the same reasons that we entered the European War against Germany. If this is not the case, then it appears to me that from an American point of view, we should not involve ourselves in what may be a ten-year military entanglement in Europe. The American people cannot say that we are going to insist that any given population must work out its internal social problems according to our particular conception of democracy. In any event, I have the most serious doubt that outside forces entering upon such an enterprise can do other than infinite harm, for any great wave of emotion must ferment and spread under repression. In the swing of the social pendulum from the extreme left back toward the right, it will find the point of stabilization based on racial instincts that could never be established by outside intervention.

"I think we have also to contemplate what would actually happen if we undertook military intervention in, say, a case like Hungary.<sup>11</sup> We should probably be involved in years of police duty and our first act would probably, in the nature of things, make us a party to reëstablishing the reactionary classes in their economic domination over the lower classes. This is against our fundamental national spirit, and I doubt whether our soldiers under these circumstances could resist infection with Bolshevik ideas. It also requires consideration as to whether or not our people at home, on gradual enlightenment as to the social wrongs of the lower classes in these countries, would stand for our providing power by which such reactionaries held their position, and we would perchance be thrown into an attempt as governors to work out social reorganization of these countries. We thus become a mandatory with a vengeance. We become, in fact, one of four mandates, each with a different political and social outlook, for it would necessarily be a joint Allied undertaking. Furthermore, in our present engagements with France, England and Italy we become a junior in this partnership of four. It is therefore inevitable that in these matters, where our views and principles are at variance with the European Allies, we would find ourselves subordinated and even committed to policies against our convictions."

<sup>11</sup> Then under a Soviet government.



The plan of a neutral commission was outlined in these words:

"That some neutral of international reputation for probity and ability should be allowed to create a second Belgian Relief Commission for Russia . . . to give to him diplomatic, financial and transportation support; that he should open negotiations with the Allied Governments on the ground of desire to enter upon the humane work of saving life, and ask the conditions upon which ships carrying food and other necessities will be allowed to pass. He should be told that we will raise no obstruction and would even help in his humanitarian task, if he gets assurance that the Bolsheviki will cease all militant action across certain defined boundaries and cease their subsidizing of disturbances abroad; under these conditions that he could raise money, ships, and food either from inside or outside Russia; that he must secure an agreement covering equitable distribution, and he might even demand that Germany help pay for this. . . . It would appear to me that such a proposal would at least test out whether this is a militant force engrossed upon world domination. If such an arrangement could be accomplished it might at least give a period of rest along the frontiers of Europe and would give some hope of stabilization. Time can thus be taken to determine whether or not this whole system is a world danger, and whether the Russian people will not themselves swing back to moderation and themselves bankrupt these ideas. This plan, if successful, would save an immensity of helpless human life and would save our country from further entanglements which to-day threaten to pull us from our national ideals."

Upon receiving encouragement from President Wilson to proceed along the lines suggested in his memorandum, Hoover asked Dr. Fridtjof Nansen, who during the war had served as head of the Norwegian Food Mission to the United States, to visit him. Hoover suggested that Nansen create a neutral relief commission, after the plan of the Commission for Relief in Belgium with an executive committee including representatives of Switzerland, Holland, Norway, and Sweden, and that this committee take over the problem of relief in Russia, particularly in the larger cities where the need of food, medicines, and other relief supplies was the greatest. Dr. Nansen at first



felt that his experience and the resources he would have available did not warrant his undertaking such a project, but Hoover assured him that he would have the financial support of the American Relief Administration; that he could rely on further support from the Allies; and finally, that the Bolshevik Government, holding the Imperial gold reserve, could be expected to take over the larger part of the financial burden. Upon the further assurance from Hoover that he would also furnish the entire staff to handle the purchasing and the transportation of the food to Russian ports, Nansen consented to head a commission, and the other neutrals were invited to participate. The next step was to secure the formal approval of the Council of Four for the project, and to this end Hoover and Nansen drew up the following letter addressed to President Wilson and Prime Ministers Clemenceau, Orlando and Lloyd George:

"Paris, April 3, 1919.

"My dear Mr. President:—

"The present food situation in Russia, where hundreds of thousands of people are dying monthly from sheer starvation and disease, is one of the problems now uppermost in all men's minds. As it appears that no solution of this food and disease question has so far been reached in any direction, I would like to make a suggestion from a neutral point of view for the alleviation of this gigantic misery, on purely humanitarian grounds.

"It would appear to me possible to organize a purely humanitarian commission for the provisioning of Russia, the food-stuffs and medical supplies to be paid for perhaps to some considerable extent by Russia itself, the justice of distribution to be guaranteed by such a commission, the membership of the commission to be comprised of Norwegian, Swedish and possibly Dutch, Danish and Swiss nationalities. It does not appear that the existing authorities in Russia would refuse the intervention of such a commission of wholly non-political order, devoted solely to the humanitarian purpose of saving life. If thus organized upon the lines of the Belgian Relief Commission, it would raise no question of political recognition or negotiations between the Allies with the existing authorities in Russia.

"I recognize keenly the large political issues involved, and I

would be glad to know under what conditions you would approve such an enterprise and whether such commission could look for actual support in finance, shipping, food and medical supplies from the United States Government.

"I am addressing a similar note to Messrs. Orlando, Clemenceau and Lloyd George.

"Believe me, my dear Mr. President,

Yours most respectfully,

(Signed) FRIDTJOF NANSEN."

Hoover attended the session of the Council of Four at which this letter was discussed and brought with him to the meeting a draft of a reply which he laid before the Council and which was accepted, each one of the heads of the States initialling the document. This document in the form of a reply to Nansen was as follows:

"Paris, April 9, 1919.

"Dear Sir:—

"The misery and suffering in Russia described in your letter of April 3rd, appeals to the sympathies of all peoples. It is shocking to humanity that millions of men, women and children, lack the food and the necessities which make life endurable.

"The Governments and peoples whom we represent would be glad to coöperate, without thought of political, military, or financial advantage, in any proposal which would relieve this situation in Russia. It seems to us that such a commission as you propose would offer a practical means of achieving the beneficent results you have in view, and could not, either in its conception or its operation, be considered as having any other aim than the 'humanitarian purpose of saving life.'

"There are great difficulties to be overcome, political difficulties, owing to the existing situation in Russia, and difficulties of supply and transport. But if the existing local governments of Russia are as willing as the Governments and people whom we represent to see succor and relief given to the stricken peoples of Russia, no political obstacle will remain. There will remain, however, the difficulties of supply, finance and transport which we have mentioned and also the problem of distribution in Russia itself. The problem of supply we can

ourselves hope to solve, in connection with the advice and co-operation of such a commission as you propose. The problem of finance would seem to us to fall upon the Russian authorities. The problem of transport of supplies to Russia we can hope to meet with the assistance of your own and other neutral governments whose interest should be as great as our own and whose losses have been far less. The problems of transport in Russia and of distribution can be solved only by the people of Russia themselves, with the assistance, advice and supervision of your commission.

"Subject to your supervision, the problem of distribution should be solely under the control of the people of Russia themselves. The people in each locality should be given, as under the régime of the Belgian Relief Commission, the fullest opportunity to advise your commission upon the methods and the personnel by which their community is to be relieved. In no other circumstances could it be believed that the purpose of this relief was humanitarian, and not political; under no other condition could it be certain that the hungry would be fed.

"That such a course would involve cessation of all hostilities within definitive lines in the territory of Russia is obvious. And the cessation of hostilities would necessarily involve a complete suspension of the transfer of troops and military material of all sorts to and within Russian territory. Indeed, relief to Russia which did not mean a return to a state of peace would be futile, and would be impossible to consider.

"Under such conditions as we have outlined, we believe that your plan could be successfully carried into effect, and we should be prepared to give it our full support.

(Signed)

V. E. ORLANDO,  
D. LLOYD GEORGE,  
WOODROW WILSON,  
G. CLEMENCEAU."

Having secured the formal approval of the Council of Four, Hoover, in conference with Nansen, drafted a telegram to the Soviet authorities, including in its text the two letters given above and requesting the Soviets to give their views. The services of the Netherlands Government were secured to dispatch this telegram from their wireless station. The French



also undertook to dispatch it, but whether they ever did so is uncertain. At any rate, the message, which was filed on April 17, was unaccountably delayed, the Soviet officials stating in their reply, which was sent three weeks later, that the message had not reached them until May 4. In the meantime a great deal had happened.

As soon as it became known that a plan was afoot to send food to Russia, there arose a hurricane of opposition. The French press turned loose a torrent of picturesque charges, among them, that the proposal was part of an insidious plan to benefit American farmers by extending their market and to give American business interests an entering wedge in railroad and other concessions in Russia.<sup>12</sup> The representatives of Kolchak and Denikin at Paris and their supporters among the Allies condemned the plan as designed to give moral and material support to the Bolsheviks just when they were on the point of being overthrown by the counter-revolutionary parties.<sup>13</sup> To this argument a leader of the Archangel anti-Bolshevik Government, holding with the aid of the Allies a few desolate kilometers of ice and snow added, with bland disregard of the conditions of the proposal: "The proposition to feed our enemies comes when the moment of victory is near for us, and it is entirely outside the question to think that we should cease fighting in order to permit provisions to reach our enemies."<sup>14</sup> The *Tory Morning Post* (of London) characterized the plan as "a scheme which would countenance crime, betray good friends, and be the beginning of commitments which might lead to universal anarchy."<sup>15</sup> The *New York Nation*, representing the other extreme, discovered in the proposal a plot against the Bolsheviks. "The project for relief through neutral agencies," said the *Nation*, "probably was

<sup>12</sup> "They (the Americans) treat directly with Lenin, pocketing grants of concessions . . . The directing idea is to get rid of food stocks accumulated in view of a long war, and to seize on the Russian market and the natural resources of the country . . . etc." M. Géraud in *L'Echo*, April 18, 1919. Also *New York Times*, April 20, 1919.

<sup>13</sup> Prince Lvov, Sazonov, Chaikovsky and Maklakov in the name of the Russian Political Conference opposed the plan on the ground that it would recognize the Bolsheviks' right to dispose of former Imperial funds. *Daily Mail* (Paris Ed.), May 12. Also *L'Echo de Paris*, April 16; *The Times* (London), May 14; *Daily Mail*, May 17, 1919.

<sup>14</sup> *New York Times*, April 23, 1919.

<sup>15</sup> April 16, 1919.



entered into with the thought of saving face if it were found necessary finally to deal with the Soviet Government; but in the meantime there is a fair chance of utilizing it to supply the counter-revolutionists and starve the Bolsheviks." <sup>16</sup> Coincidentally reports went out from French sources to America that Hoover and other Americans were supporting the Bolsheviks.

The French representatives at the Peace Conference were not greatly dejected by the clamor of opposition raised by the anti-Bolsheviks and the supporters of Allied intervention. Premier Clemenceau had always opposed any plan which looked toward leaving Russia to work out its own salvation, on the ground that the country would rapidly fall a prey to the Germans. He had opposed the Prinkipo scheme and had stated in the Council of Ten that French opinion was unanimously opposed to it, and that Kolchak had accused the Allies of having practically disarmed his troops because his soldiers never knew whether they ought to fight or wait for the next armistice. Hoover's plan had been no more favorably received by the French Premier, who had affixed his signature to the reply of the Council of Four with some reluctance. Pichon, the Foreign Secretary, was of the same mind as his chief and gave effect to his opposition with a well aimed torpedo in the shape of a public statement. This statement, while purporting to clarify the position of the French Government in the matter of relief to Russia, was practically a repudiation of Clemenceau's agreement to the neutral commission plan. It gave great aid and comfort to those who were trying to wreck the project. It is quoted in full as a characteristic sample of the official reasoning that held a predominating influence on Russian policy at this time:

"April 16th, 1919.

I. "Mr. Nansen's proposal to attempt to revictual certain large Russian towns which are accessible and whose inhabitants are suffering from starvation can only be received with sympathy by the French Government which shares this humane attitude.

"On the other hand, the French Government cannot give its

<sup>16</sup> April 26, 1919.

support to any step which might invest this tentative with a political character, the result of which would be a moral and material reinforcement of the iniquitous Bolshevik Government, an evident support of its dangerous propaganda and finally, the abandonment and definite loss of the loyal parts of Russia and of the Russians who have remained faithful to the Allies.

II. "The French Government makes the following conditions contingent upon its acceptance of Mr. Nansen's proposal:

"(1.) The revictualling of Russia to be clearly delimited, as it is physically impossible to undertake the revictualling of the whole of Russia and as only a few large towns are accessible; furthermore, we ought not to run the risk of compromising by a new enterprise the still very imperfect revictualling of the Allied countries of Central Europe.

"(2.) No negotiations shall be entered into by or for the Allies with the Bolsheviks who would not fail to avail themselves of it for their propaganda or for their indirect recognition.

"(3.) Mr. Nansen would therefore act in a personal capacity, in his own name or in the name of the neutrals who would form his committee of revictualling.

"(4.) Mr. Nansen shall judge for himself on the spot of the possibility of organizing the revictualling of which he would maintain an absolute control as regards:

- a. The receipt of the provisions.
- b. The distribution of same through neutral agents aided by the population and Russian "coöperatives" entirely without the intervention of the Bolshevik Government.
- c. The equitable distribution, without social distinction among the different classes of population suffering from starvation.

"The most definite guarantee must be given in this particular as the situation is entirely different from that of Belgium where the German authorities had an interest in facilitating the revictualling of the population from the outside and in the distribution by the local authorities, whereas the Bolsheviks by their own confession pursue the systematic destruction of the bourgeois class.

III. "No political complexion shall be given to this humane tentative as it would be a direct or indirect recognition of the anarchical and criminal régime of the Bolsheviks and an extraordinary reinforcement of their work of disintegration in Europe. Moreover, it would be of no avail in putting an end to the régime of terror imposed upon the country by the Bolsheviks for, whatever their promises may be (and we know of how little value these are), it is only by violent means that they have been able to maintain themselves temporarily, in spite of the impossible situation in which they are plunged as a result of the disappearance of the means of transport, of all sources of production and of all economic organization.

"As to the idea of a mutual cessation of hostilities between the Bolshevik and the Russian Governments (such as those of Admiral Kolchak and General Denikin), it would not be accepted in good faith by either the one or the other parties and it would be an intervention in the internal policy of Russia to the detriment of the Russians who remained faithful to the Allies and who do not possess the stocks of arms and munitions upon which the Bolsheviks have laid their hands and with which they are abundantly supplied. The result would be to deliver the rest of Russia to massacre, oppression and Bolshevik anarchy in a short time.

(Signed)

STEPHEN PICHON."

As in most controversies, and invariably in the case of Russia since the revolution, the original matter at issue was ignored to suit the strategy of the controversialists. Although opposition and misinterpretation came from both the friends and the enemies of the Soviets, the latter did more damage to the plan, because there were more of them. In order to bring back to light the humanitarian purpose of his project, now completely lost in the political *melée*, Hoover issued the following statement to the Press on April 21, 1919:

"The favorable reply of the Associated Governments to the proposal of Doctor Nansen that a neutral commission should be allowed to undertake the feeding of the people of the principal cities of Russia, is based on three conceptions:

"First, that in giving permission to a neutral commission to undertake the humanitarian work, it in no way comprises any negotiations between the Allies and the government of Russia,



nor does it imply any approval of their methods of government. The situation in this particular is very much akin to the Belgian Relief Commission, through which the Allied Governments did not make any recognition of the German Government of Belgium.

"Second, that there shall be complete justice in distribution to all classes, regardless of all distinctions and the guarantees of a strong neutral commission that this will be the case.

"The third conception is that the Bolsheviki are to keep themselves within a certain circumscribed area, ceasing all military action and attempts at invasions.

"The primary reasons for this action are purely humanitarian. Hundreds of thousands of people are dying monthly from starvation and beyond even this, it is the wish of the world that fighting and the killing of men should cease. Other reasons have been also brought to bear. The newly born democracies of Siberia, Kuban, Finland, Estonia, Lettland, Livonia, Poland, Ruthenia, Rumania, Armenia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Austria, and other nationalities which surround Bolshevik Russia must have a breathing spell to build up some stability. There is little hope of setting up any orderly government in these places and of getting their people back to production unless they can raise food and necessities for next year; unless they can be relieved of the constant threat of Bolshevik invasion and the necessity to keep armies in being out of resources founded on misery.

"Again, the brunt of this famine in Russia is being thrown by the Bolsheviki upon the skilled workmen who refused to accept their doctrines, upon the merchants, the storekeeper and professional classes and, unless food is put into Russia, all these classes will be dead before the next harvest."

Two weeks passed without any official reply from Russia. The French press announced, in the meantime, that the neutral commission plan had been rejected by Moscow and newspapers published an interview attributed to Chicherin, in which it was stated that the Soviet Government distrusted the proposal as set forth in French and American radios, since it appeared principally advantageous to the anti-Bolsheviks, and made no provision for a general agreement between the Soviets and the Allies. Finally, the Chicherin statement characterized the neutrals, under whose direction the commission was to work,



as the bitter enemies of the Soviet Government with which they had severed all relations.<sup>17</sup>

According to the interview, the Soviet Government had not reached a decision, but the effect of the publication of these alleged views of the Commissar of Foreign Affairs was to encourage those who held it futile to attempt to deal with the Bolsheviks, and that the only hope of saving Russia lay in the victory of the White armies. The hopes of such a victory in the immediate future were raised by the publication of reports of the victorious advance of Kolchak's army,<sup>18</sup> of the flight of the Soviet officials from Petrograd, and of internal revolts against the Bolshevik power. Meanwhile at Paris the day for completing the treaty approached and the problems containing the most political T.N.T., which had been kept from detonation by careful handling, began to explode with a violence that rocked and cracked the edifice of Allied unity, built with such care but of rather immiscible materials. Between the sending of the relief proposal to Moscow and the receipt of the reply came the Italian crisis (April 21–May 5); Japanese crisis (April 28–30); and the adoption of the revised League Covenant by the Peace Conference (April 28). The German delegates, summoned to receive their sentence, arrived in Paris on April 29 and received the treaty from Clemenceau a week later. In the smoke and uproar raised by these reverberating events Russia was temporarily obscured.

### THE SOVIET REPLY

On May 13, the long awaited reply of the Soviet Government reached Paris.<sup>19</sup> It was a long one. It discussed with caustic bitterness the Allied policy toward Russia and denounced the aims and conduct of the White armies, that the Allies were supporting. Chicherin made a sharp distinction between the letter addressed to the Council of Four and the reply of the Council, which caused Dr. Nansen's original hu-

<sup>17</sup> *Current History*, June, 1919.

<sup>18</sup> *New York Times*, April 20, 1919, article under heading "Red Collapsing in East" and April 22, "Red Rule Totters as Kolchak Wins."

<sup>19</sup> Full text of this reply will be found in *Russian-American Relations, March, 1917–March, 1920*. 332–336. New York, 1920.

manitarian intentions to have been "fundamentally disfigured by the governments of the Associated Powers." The Soviet Government approved the humanitarian objects of the plan, but disapproved the condition that hostilities and the transfer of troops and war material be discontinued. This was held by Chicherin to be an attempt to change the external or internal conditions of Russia, since the cessation of hostilities would prevent the Soviet Government from obtaining the successes against its opponents which it had every reason to expect—the diametrically opposite expectation being held by their opponents.<sup>20</sup> This whole question of the cessation of hostilities was held to be wholly in the domain of politics, and was one which the Soviet Government could discuss only directly with the Associated Powers. The Commissar of Foreign Affairs stated the willingness of his government to begin negotiations at any time, but pointed out that it was impossible to make any concessions referring to these fundamental problems of their existence under the guise of presumably humanitarian work. The Soviet Government was, moreover, ready to assist in the humanitarian program, as distinct from political factors, and to cover expenses of the work and the cost of foodstuffs in Russian goods, if desired.

### THE DEFEAT OF THE PLAN

The Bolsheviks' refusal to consider the cessation of hostilities, except at the price of a conference with the Entente Powers was in itself enough to wreck the relief plan. The most hysterical interventionists regarded the Chicherin note as a confirmation of the Bolshevik aim to destroy government and order in Western Europe, if not by invasion, then by propaganda. Any kind of political recognition, as was implicit in a conference, would be but playing into the hands of the "enemies of civilization." Those who so violently opposed the Prinkipo conference were even more firmly entrenched in their opposition in May than in January. The French, the Italian Governments and an influential section of the Lloyd George coalition were still intent on maintaining the policy—as described by Pichon—"of furnishing at all acces-

<sup>20</sup> See the final paragraph of the Pichon statement quoted on page 21.

sible points of Russia all the aid and succor which it is possible to give to help them [the Russian people] escape from the bloody and disorderly tyranny of the Bolsheviks, and to reconstitute a regular government by themselves." Moreover, it had come to be pretty generally believed that this "disease of Bolshevism" was like those devastating plagues that in the past had swept over Europe from the East, and threatened with the aid of the "disorderly tyranny of the Bolsheviks" to rage through Europe and even America. Intervention in Russia had long since ceased to be for the purpose of reëstablishing the eastern front; it was to stamp out the plague or to create a *cordon sanitaire* to protect Europe from political and economic anarchy. Bolshevism, it should be noted, in most minds did not represent a political or economic theory, but the destruction of public order, the end of all security of person and property, the reign of bloody violence. The bombastic propaganda of the Bolsheviks themselves, as well as that of their opponents, contributed heavily to this state of mind, which prejudiced any sane approach to the Russian problem.

Other events at this time, though kept from the public knowledge, gave weight to the arguments of the advocates of the *cordon sanitaire*. A force of French and Greeks occupied Odessa along with Russians of the Denikin faction and Ukrainian Nationalists. The hodge-podge government set up was not relished by the population whom the Allies had come to deliver from Bolshevik tyranny. There was corruption and scandalous speculation in necessities, which the incompetent provisional government did not or could not prevent. Four-fifths of the workers were unemployed, and they starved while food in abundance was for sale at exorbitant prices in the markets. The occupying force was constantly menaced by attack from the rear. More serious than this was the growth of discontent among the soldiers of the occupying force and the sailors of the fleet. Against the judgment of the local commander, the French were obliged to remain in their precarious position until they were forced to withdraw somewhat precipitately to the Dniester,<sup>21</sup> leaving the city and some

<sup>21</sup> In first week of April, 1919. This affair was kept out of the press for several weeks. It was finally debated in the Chamber of Deputies, June 11,



valuable supplies in the hands of the jubilant Bolsheviks. Then followed more trouble. The soldiers who had been in the Army of the Orient at Salonika were fed up with the East. They complained because the food was bad, because they got no mail, because leaves were too short. The war was over and they wanted to go home. Discipline crumbled and there were signs of open mutiny. There were mutinous disturbances among the French troops at Constanza. Similar troubles developed in the fleet, and the Red Flag was run up on the *Jean Bart* and the *Waldeck-Rousseau*. The mutinies were settled with promises to return the men to France; but there was consternation in high places. High officials, naturally reluctant, as is frequently the case, to attribute disaster to bad staff work, placed the responsibility on Bolshevik plot and propaganda. Bolshevik propaganda was undoubtedly at work (for example the *Communist*, printed in French, was secretly circulated among the troops), but its task was easy, for it had only to water the ground already prepared and seeded with dissatisfaction and discontent. At this very time, at the other extremity of Russia among the Allied troops at Archangel, there was also disaffection and discontent, not so violently expressed but arising from similar physical and psychological causes, for which the bacillus of Bolshevism got the credit. This like the Odessa affair was discretely handled by the censor.

General opinion, without all the facts, was, like official opinion, disturbed by the failure of the Odessa venture and the indecisiveness at Archangel. But no clear line of policy emerged. Only an insatiably militaristic few still clamored for Allied military intervention; and still fewer were willing to consider trying peace; for Bolshevism was too dangerous to treat with. "This peril is the more insidious because it is silent and gradual. When the crash comes the decay may be found to have eaten into the heart of the State till nothing is left." To suggest making an effort to meet this menace with a program of peace and bread was merely a policy of "patting



the Bolshevik mad dog on the head and trying to make friends with him.”<sup>22</sup>

As soon as the Soviet reply was received, however, Hoover discussed it with various leaders of the Allies with a view to securing their acceptance of the proposal that all hostilities in every direction should cease. Some of the British were sympathetic to such a plan, but there was strenuous opposition from the French Foreign Office, which ultimately defeated it. In the course of these discussions, Hoover had a meeting with Pichon, the French Foreign Minister, to whom he declared his opinion that the invasions of Russia were essentially landlord invasions; that the peasants were bound to stand with the Bolsheviks in repelling such attacks; and that all these counter-revolutionary forces must ultimately fail, because of the social and political situation in Russia. From this opinion Pichon entirely dissented, considering it only a question of time until the Bolshevik regime should be crushed. The opposition voiced by Pichon together with the pressure of other problems of more immediate concern to the Peace Conference made it futile to attempt to push this project further at that time. And so ended the first attempt to send relief to Russia.

<sup>22</sup> *Springfield Republican*, April 10, 1919, and *New York Times*, April 18, 1919. A British Parliamentary paper (Cmd. 8), Russia No. 1, 1919, reporting Bolshevik atrocities, was issued during April and gave fuel to the anti-Bolshevik flame.

## CHAPTER II

### AT LONDON AND MOSCOW: 1920

DURING the summer of 1920 the A.R.A. tried again to make a relief agreement with the Soviet Authorities. The occasion arose in the midst of the Polish-Russian War when A.R.A. feeding stations in eastern Poland were swept over by the contending armies. By these negotiations, which were carried on in the very midst of military and diplomatic crises, the A.R.A. sought three things: first, the continuation of children's feeding stations in territory overrun by the Red Armies in their swift westward drive; second, the extension of A.R.A. relief to children in cities of Soviet Russia, if and where it were needed; and, third, the assurance that the feeding would be conducted "without regard to race, politics, or religion." In order to clear up a situation much clouded by controversy, it is desirable to interpolate in our story of relief negotiations a brief account of how the A.R.A. happened to be in the zone of war, the effect of military operations on its work there, and the diplomatic complexities of the failure of the A.R.A.—Soviet negotiations in London and Moscow.

### IN THE EASTERN DISTRICTS OF POLAND

In January, 1919, the A.R.A. began the relief of Poland on a large scale. In May of that year a special children's relief program supplemented the general relief which steadily expanded, giving the new state the strength to conquer those disintegrating and subversive forces which threatened to check, in the anarchy of revolution, the forward course of national independence.<sup>1</sup> Of this American aid Count Harodyski said:

<sup>1</sup> "I beg to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your most generous letter. It contains assurances of relief both for the people and their government and will but strengthen the elements of peace and order in my country. I could not dream of a better and more substantial assistance at this critical

"This is the first time any nation ever made a promise to Poland—and kept it." By January, 1920, the A.R.A. kitchens were giving daily a ration of hot, health-building food to 1,080,722 young Poles, Germans, Jews, White Russians, Ukrainians and other representatives of the races who lived or had found refuge in the territories then controlled by Polish arms. By May the number had climbed to 1,315,490, and, side by side with the relief of children, marched general relief through the delivery by the A.R.A. of food stocks to the new nation. This growth represented in part an increase in the allocation in Congress Poland, but more particularly an expansion into what were known as the "Eastern Districts," which included the most eastern territories in which the Polish race predominated, as well as parts of White Russia, Galicia and the Western Ukraine. These were the regions over which the great Russian steam-roller moved on its way towards Germany in the autumn of 1914, and over which it lumbered precariously back in 1915 with Hindenburg close behind. The marching and counter-marching of gigantic forces made deserts of prosperous provinces. The Grand Duke Nicholas, emulating the tactics of his forefathers against Napoleon, burned the villages on his line of retreat through Poland and drove the inhabitants, with such belongings as they could carry, before him into the center of Russia. Some families, of course, remained, hiding like frightened animals in the forests and fields; others began to trickle back as soon as the Russian armies melted away. There the A.R.A. found them, living like ground-squirrels in dugouts, trenches and caves, and lacking food, clothing and everything necessary to keep themselves alive.<sup>2</sup> If there were people anywhere in the world who

moment." From a letter from I. J. Paderewski, President of the Council of Ministers of Poland, to Hoover, 8 May, 1919, in reply to a statement of plans for the further expansion of Polish relief.

<sup>2</sup>War operations totally destroyed 1,546,000 dwellings in Poland and even as late as 1922, 20,000 peasant families were still forced to live in caves. A. Skrzynski, *Poland and Peace*, 51, London, 1923. Dr. Vernon Kellogg, who visited Poland in November, 1915, wrote of the devastation (later intensified), of the sight "of irregular rows along deserted country roads, of these black, bare chimneys standing up stark and staring from the flat Polish plain. These are all that reveal the sites of the one-time comfortable villages of the land." From a *Report on the Present Situation in Poland*, in the archives of the Commission for Relief in Belgium.



needed help, it was those of the eastern districts to whom the A.R.A. came in 1919 and 1920, without enquiring of them whether they aspired to become citizens of Poland, of the new White Russia, or of something else. Doubtless had they been asked to what race they belonged, or what national movement they supported, they would have replied as the Ukrainians usually did, "the Orthodox."<sup>3</sup>

When the A.R.A. came into the eastern districts, they had but lately fallen under the control of the Poles as the result, first, of Pilsudski's drive across White Russia to block the passageway between the Dvina and the Dnieper against the Bolsheviks, and second, of the guerilla warfare with the Ukrainians for the possession of eastern Galicia and western Ukraine. The first of these operations consisted chiefly of taking over the position vacated by the Germans. But the struggle with the Ukrainians, though not a war in the modern sense, was cruel, devastating and relentless, like a feud between neighbors whose grievances were long standing and whose enmity had been sharpened through many generations. The failure of the Ukrainians early in 1919 to capture Lvov, which was desperately defended by men, women, girls and boys, really signalized the end of this war and established Polish supremacy<sup>4</sup> in these regions.

Although desultory fighting with bands of Ukrainian Nationalists continued, the chief opponents of the Poles were now the Ukrainian Bolsheviks who differed with the Nationalists on all matters except hatred of their western neighbors. The Polish army became a part of that elongated western front against Bolshevism that extended from Finland to the Caspian Sea and was held by troops from half the nations of Europe. The nature of the struggle did not change, though its limits did. Its cruelty and destructiveness, particularly for non-combatants, did not abate. Each combatant accused the other of monstrous atrocities—and there was some justice in both

<sup>3</sup> Ralph Butler's *The New Eastern Europe*, London, 1919, contains an interesting discussion of the early days of the Polish State and of the Ukrainian question. Chapters VI and VII.

<sup>4</sup> The Peace Conference on June 25, 1919, sanctioned the Polish military occupation of Eastern Galicia. On March 15, 1923, the principal Allied Powers, under Article 87 of the Treaty of Versailles, assigned Eastern Galicia, along with the Vilna area, to Poland.



accusations—of the pillage of towns, the massacre of peasants, of the burning of villages, of pogroms against Jews. No rules of war were observed by either side, and the Bolsheviks informed the Polish Foreign Minister that all captured Polish officers would be treated not as prisoners of war, but would be tried for their crimes before the Revolutionary Tribunal and that the Ukrainian Cheka would seize as hostages (adopting the technique of the Red Terror) all Polish nobility and bourgeoisie found in Ukrainian territory and hold them responsible for the crimes of the Polish Government.<sup>5</sup>

Neither the Poles nor the Russian Bolsheviks, however, carried on aggressive action against the other. The Bolsheviks had their hands full of other matters. Kolchak was threatening in the Urals; Denikin advancing from the south; Yudenitch, the Estonians, the Letts, and the Germans from the northwest; and the Reds had no desire to add another active enemy to their troubles. This is not strange, but the curious thing is that Poland did not seize this opportunity, when the enemies of the Soviets were nearest to success, to strike the blow which might have driven the Bolsheviks from Moscow. Instead they waited until 1920 when the Bolsheviks had disposed of Kolchak, Denikin, and the rest and were ready to strike back with all their power. The reason is not far to seek. Like the Estonians, the Letts and the others who had at last broken away from the grip of Russian tyranny, the Poles had no desire to help install in Moscow a regime that might challenge their dearly prized independence. They profoundly distrusted Denikin and the rest of the Russian counter-revolutionists, who, as Skrzynski says, "would have received with great gratitude the help of the Poles, but only on the understanding, scarcely concealed, that such help was forthcoming from the Poles as faithful subjects of Russia."<sup>6</sup> Radek, writing from the Communist point of view and with personal knowledge of these events, insists that an agreement was actually made with Pilsudski, by which the opposing

<sup>5</sup> Radio télégramme au Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de la République de la Pologne M. Paderewski, Varsovie, July 22nd, 1919, in *L'Ukraine Sovietiste. Quatre Années de Guerre et de Blocus. Recueil des Documents Officiels d'après les Livres Rouges Ukrainiens*. 146 Berlin, 1922.

<sup>6</sup> Skrzynski, op. cit., 39.

armies remained on lines that had been agreed upon. Pilsudski, who was a Russophobe, made the agreement, according to Radek,<sup>7</sup> because he feared the Czarist generals more than Soviet Russia, and kept the arrangement secret, because he had no desire to interrupt the flow of French and British money that reached Warsaw to subsidize fighting against the Bolsheviks.

At any rate, whether Pilsudski had a secret agreement and, as Radek claims, deceived the Entente, there was comparative peace in the eastern districts, in those parts of White Russia and Galicia west of the Polish-Bolshevik front. The A.R.A. made good use of this calm between the tempests by energetically creating food stations across the length and breadth of this war-furrowed plain. To the harassed, hate-ridden people it brought the comfort of friendly, disinterested, and substantial help. It was help, moreover, untainted by the poison of political, religious, or racial controversies.<sup>8</sup> It was the first practical exposé of a new spirit, unknown to the children of an age of hate.

But this period of clear weather did not last long. Ugly clouds began to rise when the Soviets, following up their promising peace negotiations with the Baltic states, proposed negotiations with Poland on January 29, 1920. The Poles did not give them serious consideration, and the reply which the Government ultimately and reluctantly made was so offensive in spirit and so extravagant in its demands that peace on the basis of the Soviets' terms, which were by no means unreasonable, was obviously not desired.

### THE POLISH-RUSSIAN WAR

The popular explanation of the Polish-Russian war—and a favorite one with the Communists—that the Entente, partic-

<sup>7</sup> Karl Radek, *Die Auswärtige Politik Soviet Russlands*. 55. Hamburg, 1921. Radek also asserts that Lord Curzon, like Pilsudski, but for reasons relating to the politics of the Near East, had no desire to see the White generals victorious, and therefore had a hand in the defeat of Denikin and Yudenitch by preventing full British support of these enterprises.

<sup>8</sup> The instructions to representatives of the A.R.A. on the subject of political complications were explicit: "Keep entirely out of politics. There are political missions assigned to political work, and we should forward to them any matters of interest in their work, or to the advantage of Poland in the general Allied cause, but your work is entirely that of relief." Par. 12 of "Instructions for 'Provincial' American Delegates of Relief." Warsaw, February, 19, 1919.

ularly France, drove Poland, "the gendarme of the east," to undertake a mad adventure, is like so many popular explanations, true, only in part. For, whether the Entente inspired the disastrous adventure or not, there is no doubt that it was a logical move for those high personages in Warsaw who, under the spell of the so-called federalist doctrine,<sup>9</sup> already saw Poland as the liberator of the neighboring small nationalities, which in gratitude to their deliverer would erect states to be the satellites of the Polish sun.<sup>10</sup> This grandiose scheme, unfortunately ignored the fact that the country was totally unprepared for any such crusade, and furthermore, that such neighbors as the Ukrainians and the Lithuanians would welcome almost any fate in preference to Polish rule, however disguised.

In agreement with Petljura, the leader of a discouraged remnant of Ukrainian Nationalists, the Poles in April advanced unmolested to Kiev, which they occupied early in May. There was tremendous enthusiasm in Warsaw, and the world press began to tell again of the impending fall of the Bolsheviks as a result of the smashing victories of Polish arms. Early in June the Bolsheviks struck back and the Poles began their retreat. As they hurried out of Kiev, Polish soldiers exploded a charge of dynamite under the railroad bridge over the Dnieper. The bridge collapsed and with it went the doctrine of Polish federalism. For the most important result of this whole campaign was, as Radek has said, "to help those whom the world regarded as a little handful of adventurers who had seized power by force . . . to become a national government around which is rallying every Russian who desires to defend the independence of his country."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> The Warsaw press discussed this fascinating topic voluminously. For example, *Czas*, March 28, 1920, *Gazeta Warszawska*, March 21 and 22, 1920.

<sup>10</sup> The fabled "bulging corn-bins" of the Ukraine, which persuaded Czernin to sacrifice Polish friendship by his "Bread Peace" with the Ukraine on February 9, 1918, were now used to solicit western support of the Polish adventure. As soon as Poland had established order in the Ukraine, its grain would become available to hungry Europe. Conceivably also, the mineral wealth of the Donetz might be of interest to France and Britain. Lloyd George was unconvinced and warned the Poles (in January, 1920) against the adventure. The French, it appears, saw merits in the scheme. A. L. Kennedy: *Old Diplomacy and New*, 318, 336. London, 1922. The author, who was in Warsaw during the critical period of this war, is pro-Polish and apparently was the confidant of certain Polish officials.

<sup>11</sup> *Freiheit*, August 7, 1920.



RELIEF IN THE ZONE OF WAR <sup>12</sup>

Throughout the month of June the Red Armies continued to surge forward and the Poles to fall back, but these movements were so synchronized that no very serious collisions occurred. Pilsudski planned to hold the old German line, but his troops were outnumbered and outmanoeuvred, their equipment was inferior to the Bolsheviks', and their morale was low. The retreat continued. Casualties were not heavy, but the towns and villages over which the tide rolled lived again the hazardous days of 1915. These days were perhaps even more hazardous, for the troops of both forces were less strictly controlled than were the soldiers of Hindenburg and the Grand Duke. As the Poles retired, there went with them from many towns all officials and as many of the families as were able, contributing another element of confusion to the situation. Sometimes there elapsed only a few hours between the disappearance of the Poles and the appearance of the Russians; at other times there was an interval of two or three days when there was no authority of any kind, when the human wolves and jackals came from the shadows to prey upon the defenseless. From these marauders, in whose carnivals of pillage soldiers of one army or the other, out of contact with their commands, sometimes joined, the A.R.A. childfeeding supplies were no safer than the possessions of individuals. The protection of these supplies became a difficult problem for the A.R.A. Polish Mission.

The Mission desired, of course, to keep the kitchens running, for the children needed the food. This, however, proved to be impossible, for, in the first place, there were not enough Americans to cover the whole zone of operations, and had there been, it is doubtful if they would have been able to keep the kitchens open and to prevent misuse of supplies during these days of wild confusion. Furthermore, the A.R.A. had no agreement with the Soviets and therefore could not control the distribution of the food in the areas overrun by the Red Army, nor prevent its being seized for the military, or used for politi-

<sup>12</sup> For the complete story of the A.R.A. in Poland, see Sidney Brooks, "America and Poland," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, No. 44.

cal purposes in the process of sovietization that followed the Bolshevik advance. There was nothing for it, but to evacuate the supplies to Congress Poland, which, it was then believed, would be held against the Red advance.

The evacuation of supplies ahead of the front became nightmareish, as the retreat of the Poles accelerated and the confusion and demoralization grew behind the lines. The Americans adopted the hazardous practice of remaining on the job until they saw their supplies moving, which sometimes meant standing by until the Russians were almost in sight. The military and civilians were grabbing every kind of transportation in sight. Worried officials left their jobs to join the refugees, thick on the roads. There was a mad scramble to get railway cars, workmen went on a strike, and military officials, harassed and greatly excited, were unable to meet the demands of their superiors, to say nothing of those of the A.R.A. In one way or another, however, the A.R.A. moved its supplies to safety.

At this point, in desperation, the Polish Premier Grabski appealed for aid to the Supreme Council in session at Spa. He got a lecture from Lloyd George and the promise of diplomatic intervention. The British note of July 11, requesting an armistice, had little effect, for the wine of victory had gone to the heads of the Communists. The stimulating success of the Red Army had thoroughly dispelled the peace atmosphere from the Kremlin and the old Communist hope of world revolution revived to cloud the minds of the proletarian dictators. This revival of Communist imperialism found vocal expression in Moscow before a sympathetic audience at the sessions of the second Congress of the Third International. This organization, the spear-head of the world revolution, had in its earlier days been a disappointment, since its first session was largely an affair of local talent. Its second session had a better representation from other countries. Moreover, events in Italy, where the Socialist Party after its virtual capture by the Communists seemed on the point of carrying through a social revolution, appeared deeply significant to the directors of the Red International. Although the Polish Communists warned Moscow that there would be no revolution in Poland under the

pressure of a foreign army, the leaders in Moscow, flushed with the news of victory, refused to accept their verdict. Trotzky spoke rashly of Poland, no longer a barrier, but as a point of departure for the westward spread of social revolution.<sup>13</sup> Every day the delighted delegates to the Third International, for all the world like Americans before a baseball score board, assembled before the large map on which was shown the advance of the Red Armies toward Warsaw. "Those assemblies," said Zinoviev, "were highly symbolical. The best representatives of the world proletariat followed with utmost attention and anxiety the advances of our army; for everybody was conscious that the achievement of this object by the Red Army would greatly hasten the world revolution."<sup>14</sup>

And while armistice negotiations hung fire, the Russian troops continued their sweep on Warsaw, forcing the liquidation of more and more American feeding stations. The problem of the A.R.A. was no longer merely a question of withdrawing its supplies from the zone of active military operations, for it now seemed possible that Bolshevik occupation would gradually come to involve all or nearly all of Poland. The problem now was: should feeding continue, should the supplies in storage in various parts of Congress Poland be left there, and should the American personnel remain in case Warsaw fell and Congress Poland were occupied? The absence of any understanding with the Soviet Government caused much apprehension to be felt by those responsible for A.R.A. policy, not only for the supplies, which might fall into the hands of the Red Army, but for the safety of the members of the Mission who would have to remain for the continued administration of relief. In the light of the lurid stories current at this time concerning the policies and practices of the Bolsheviks, this question of the safety of personnel was a serious one.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> The statement was reported by the *Krasnaya Gazeta* (Petrograd), July 28, 1920. It was seized upon, embroidered somewhat, and used by the western press to urge support of Poland.

<sup>14</sup> M. S. Farbman, *Bolshevism in Retreat*, 139, London, 1923. Farbman believes that the famous Twenty-one Points, adopted at this Congress as the basis of admission to the Third International, were partly the result of exuberance over the unexpected victory of the Red Armies.

<sup>15</sup> Two representatives of the American Joint Distribution Committee were killed while on an inspection trip in Podolia in July, 1920.



In Warsaw the report was current at the time, that the Red troops were given a two or three day period of pillage in each town captured,<sup>10</sup> and that the troops made the most of their time and opportunities. Rumor also had it that since several Americans were serving as aviators in the Polish Army as members of the Kosciusko squadron, the Bolshevik High Command had decreed that all Americans be treated as enemies. W. P. Fuller, Jr., Chief of the A.R.A. Polish Mission, had, of course, kept his London Headquarters in close touch with developments, and on July 20, when it was known that the Soviets had rejected the British armistice proposal, wired London for instructions as to policy in the event of Russian occupation of Congress Poland. Grodno fell on the 21st. Russian troops were pouring into Galicia in the south; the press foretold a new collapse of civilization; and Lloyd George in Parliament (July 21) brought out the well worn but still nimble bugaboo of a Bolshevik-German alliance.

Hoover stated the A.R.A. policy in a cable to the A.R.A. office in London, July 23:

"My view is that if our men think it at all safe they should continue former feeding stations within Bolshevik lines if they take Warsaw Lemberg and rehabilitate old stations as rapidly as possible. After the preliminary mess of invasion they may be able to set up again in Bolshevik occupied Poland under some kind of arrangement. It would be desirable some strong man or men remain in Warsaw Lemberg with view carrying on and negotiating with Bolsheviks generally. It is impossible to define policies from U. S. but we want to show every practical zeal in feeding Polish children even in territory occupied by Bolsheviks."

There was talk of new armistice negotiations, but this did not lessen the A.R.A.'s troubles, for the outcome was uncertain and, furthermore, districts in which the A.R.A. was needed were and might continue to be under Soviet occupation.

<sup>10</sup> This rumor was not made entirely of thin air. Horst Leonhardt, writing in the *Kölnische Zeitung* (22 July, 1920), of personal experiences with Budenny says, "Budenny's cavalymen say he promised them five days license in Rostov. They took almost five weeks." Plunder, one gathers from the account, was one of the reasons for Budenny's popularity. *Living Age*, September 4, 1920.

## A.R.A.—SOVIET NEGOTIATIONS

Therefore, while these diplomatic interchanges were going on the A.R.A. at once embarked on negotiations of its own. Walter Lyman Brown, the European Director in London, communicated directly with Moscow and at the same time with Kamenev and Krassin of the Soviet Delegation then in London. On July 24, he sent a telegram to Chicherin through George Lansbury, editor of the London *Daily Herald*, the organ of the British Labor Party, extremely friendly to the Soviet Government and in close contact with the Soviet Delegation in London.<sup>17</sup> The message explained briefly the work of the A.R.A. in Poland and asked if the Soviet Government desired to have this childfeeding continued in the districts which it controlled, and if it would extend the necessary protection and recognition of A.R.A. personnel, food supplies, and equipment. Lansbury prefaced Brown's message with the following statement:

"Following message very urgent. We all urge you give permission this mission remain to feed people. They are what they say non-partisan, acting purely humanitarian lines."

After a lapse of eleven days a reply came through Lansbury in which Chicherin said that, though it was understood that the staff of the A.R.A. was chiefly composed of ex-army officers, the Soviet Government was disposed to give favorable consideration to this request, if the A.R.A. would accept certain conditions. Although the telegram gave no detailed statement of conditions, it contained the significant sentence: "Activity of organization (A.R.A.) must be placed under control of our state relief organization."

This condition of official Soviet control was in direct conflict with the A.R.A. principle of relief "without regard to race, politics, or religion," since in theory and practice food dis-

<sup>17</sup> In fact this contact was so close that there was a great uproar when the London press revealed that the *Herald* had received £75,000 from the Soviet Delegation. This, the *Herald* argued, was a "magnificent demonstration of real working class solidarity and of what Russians mean by internationalism." The capitalistic press was in vociferous agreement with the latter part of this assertion.

tribution under military Communism was on class lines.<sup>18</sup> As this conflict of principles was bound to have a great influence on these negotiations as well as on subsequent relations with the Soviet Government it must be emphasized that the A.R.A.'s insistence on this point was not merely the fruit of slavish devotion to a high sounding phrase. Abundant experience in the midst of inflamed racial, political, and religious passions of post-war Europe had proved that large scale relief such as that delivered by the A.R.A. could not be fairly and efficiently administered unless the final control definitely rested with disinterested persons such as the American representatives. If this control was necessary in western and central Europe, it was more necessary in Russia where the social struggle raged with relentless fury.

The difficulty of reconciling the A.R.A.'s and the Soviet Government's conflicting conceptions of relief control was recognized; but Brown did not give up hope. He seized for his next move, the occasion of expected Polish-Russian armistice negotiations at Minsk, which were alternately agreed upon and then postponed. But in the meantime changes in the military and diplomatic situation seriously complicated both the position of the A.R.A. in Poland and Brown's own negotiations.

The Red Army advanced with such rapidity that it seemed that the fall of Warsaw was a matter of only a few days. The diplomatic situation became tense. On August 6th Lloyd George declared in Parliament that if other measures failed to save Poland, the Allies would employ force. He then demanded through Kamenev and Krassin that Moscow agree to a ten-day truce.<sup>19</sup> The Soviet reply, refusing to grant the truce, reached the Supreme Council in session at Hythe, and talk of using British and French troops increased. Two conciliatory notes from Chicherin followed and eased the tension; whereupon the French threw more fat in the fire by

<sup>18</sup> It is true that children constituted a privileged category, but it is also true that children of the non-proletarian classes, unless surrendered to the state institutions, were not exempt from the effects of the class war.

<sup>19</sup> The force of the Prime Minister's threats was neutralized by the "Hands off Russia" movement of British labor and the warning from the labor "Council of Action," that war against Russia would have serious consequences in Britain.



announcing their recognition of the White general Wrangel, who with the remnants of Denikin's forces in the Crimea was beginning another costly, futile invasion of Soviet territory. America contributed to the diplomatic fireworks with Secretary of State Colby's note to the Italian Government, refusing to have anything to do with the Bolsheviks, since, as the Secretary put it,

"We cannot recognize, hold official relations with, or give friendly reception to the agents of a government which is determined and bound to conspire against our institutions; whose diplomats will be the agitators of dangerous revolt; whose spokesmen say that they sign agreements with no intention of keeping them."

In the midst of these events, when feeling against the Soviet Government was most tense, Brown sent this wire to the Polish Mission:

"Request you use scrupulous care in your communications and otherwise to avoid using terms which can be misinterpreted or taken exception to by anyone. We must preserve strictest neutrality both in letter and spirit to be able to carry on our purely humanitarian work with greatest measure success."

The decision that the A.R.A. should remain on the job regardless of what happened to Warsaw now had to be revised slightly when the American Embassy in London notified Brown that it was inadvisable for A.R.A. personnel to remain in occupied territory, not only because of personal danger, but because the Soviet Government might hold these men and supplies to compel official negotiations with the United States.<sup>20</sup> Brown, thereupon, immediately withdrew all previous instructions to the A.R.A. representatives in Poland and left each member of the mission to make a personal decision regarding remaining in Warsaw in the event of its capture by the Russians. All the members of the mission were willing to stay and those who could be profitably employed in the con-

<sup>20</sup> A number of Americans were already being held by the Bolshevik authorities, and negotiations for their release were being attempted indirectly through Dr. Nansen.

tinuation of the feeding arranged to do so. It seemed but a matter of hours until the city fell. Entente diplomats, unconvinced by Prince Sapieha's assurance that Warsaw was as safe as London, urged the Polish Government to remove to a safer spot, and then betook themselves to Posen whence they continued to give advice by telephone.<sup>21</sup> Then came a further word from the State Department that it desired no member of the A.R.A. to remain in the territory under Bolshevik occupation.

The final turn of events, however, made it unnecessary for the A.R.A. Mission to leave Warsaw. The counter-offensive of the Polish Army, launched August 15 under the direction of General Weygand, had a quick and remarkable success. The Bolsheviks were swept back as furiously as they had advanced, and Warsaw was safe. The difficulties which had frustrated previous attempts at armistice negotiations now quickly disappeared, and on August 17 representatives of Poland and Russia met at Minsk.

The train that bore the Polish armistice delegation from Warsaw bore also two members of the A.R.A. Polish Mission, Maurice Pate and H. C. Walker, who hoped to find at Minsk Soviet officials competent to deal with relief matters. For on August 6 Brown had wired Chicherin that these representatives of the A.R.A. would go to Minsk with the Polish armistice delegation, and had asked that they be met by Soviet officials properly authorized to discuss relief matters. Brown ended his message with this important request:

"Meantime, we urgently request that pending such discussions you **FIRSTLY**, instruct your military commanders to recognize and protect our personnel and equipment and our food stocks which have been assembled and are being held for purely humanitarian purposes of child feeding. **SECONDLY**, that you guarantee our American personnel safe conduct should forthcoming negotiations not result in continuation our child feeding operations in areas occupied by your forces. While your statement is correct that many of our personnel are ex-army officers, they have been demobilized for last year and acting in civilian capacity for us during that period. They

<sup>21</sup> Kennedy, *op. cit.*, 330.

have always been under strictest instructions to preserve neutrality both in action and spirit, their work being benevolent relief and nothing else. Position is urgent calling for quick action. Please confirm your agreement."

A few days later (August 11) Brown again took up the matter with Kamenev in London, by letter, requesting that he secure authorization from Moscow to negotiate with Brown in London. No reply beyond a formal acknowledgment of its receipt, dated September 4th, was ever secured to this letter to Kamenev, and no reply to the message to Chicherin was received until three weeks later (August 28), after Pate and Walker had arrived in Minsk and were being held in arrest as members of the Polish armistice delegation.

#### A.R.A. REPRESENTATIVES IN MOSCOW

On their arrival in Minsk, Pate and Walker were treated as members of the Polish Armistice delegation by the Soviet officials, who declined to recognize their credentials and professed no knowledge of the telegram sent from London and Warsaw to Moscow announcing the plan and purpose of their crossing the Russian lines. The Americans accepted with reservations the statement that their arrival at Minsk was wholly unexpected, and subsequent events tended to confirm their suspicions.<sup>22</sup> After three days of confinement, Pate and Walker telegraphed a protest to Chicherin and three days later a delegation consisting of representatives of the Soviet Foreign Office, of the Council for the Protection of Children, and Arthur Watts, Head of the British Friends' Relief Mission in Moscow, arrived in Minsk. This delegation, however, was without authority and, therefore, could do no more than perform agreeably the function of accompanying the two A.R.A. men to Moscow, where it was necessary to go to get action on the A.R.A. requests.

<sup>22</sup> The guard assigned to them and who accompanied them to Moscow gave the impression of almost bovine stupidity and was totally ignorant of the English language. A few days after their arrival in Moscow, Pate and Walker were much surprised to discover the erstwhile guard in the Foreign Office, well dressed and speaking perfect English.



Immediately upon arrival there, the Americans sent a note to Chicherin stating that as representatives of the A.R.A. they had two specific purposes in crossing the Soviet lines: The first was to work out with the Soviet Government a plan by which the feeding of 200,000 children in White Russia and the Ukraine east of the Curzon line might be continued by the A.R.A.; and the second, to investigate the need of children's relief in central Russia and inquire what basis of coöperation might be established between the A.R.A. and the Soviet Government for the possible conduct of such relief. This note further explained briefly the methods employed by the A.R.A. in other countries.

The government's reply signed by Nuorteva, then director of the Anglo-American Department of the Foreign Office, but previously a member of the Soviet Mission in the United States, declared that "various departments of the Russian Government . . . already have a machinery fully adequate to take special care of the children with special attention being paid to those abnormally weak." It further stated that if additional supplies were brought from abroad they could be distributed through these institutions. The A.R.A. would have the right to inspect the distribution and accounts of supplies which it contributed. It intimated that "new and technically unnecessary machinery" (such as the A.R.A. committees in other countries) would be unwelcome and undesirable. It further suggested that some agreement like that between the Soviet Government and the Joint Distribution Committee or the British Society of Friends might be worked out. This was still another way of saying that foreign relief must be administered through and controlled by Soviet Government institutions. The first part of the agreement with the Joint Distribution Committee stated: "The aid to Jewish victims of the pogroms constitutes part of the universal government (i.e. Soviet) assistance to victims of the counter-revolution and pogroms." This agreement further provided that all supplies sent from abroad should be addressed to the Russian Society of the Red Cross for the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. The Joint Distribution Committee found the arrangement so unsatisfactory

that it was obliged to break off its program in the spring of 1921.<sup>23</sup>

With regard to the work of the Friends, Watts, of the British Mission, gave Pate and Walker a copy of a memorandum entitled, "On openings for relief work by the American Friends Service Committee in the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic," which described the method of administration that would have to be accepted by the Friends and presumably by anyone else desiring to help Russian children. In this memorandum occurs this significant paragraph:

"Administration Through Soviet Organizations.

"There are a few non-Soviet relief organizations still in existence, but as the various commissariats become more and more efficient these organizations will cease to have reason to exist. As a matter of fact, they are at present dependent upon the supplies which they receive from the various commissariats. The Soviet authorities therefore insist that all relief should be administered under the control of their State organizations. This does not preclude (for the present) the giving of supplies to non-Soviet schools or clinics, but such gifts should be made through, and with the approval of, the Council for the Protection of Children. As in the event of your sending relief supplies it will be necessary to administer them through the various commissariats, I give herewith a short statement of the scope of each commissariat in so far as it concerns relief work."

On the other point raised by the Americans, the continuation of relief in White Russia and Western Ukraine, which from the American point of view was of the most immediate concern, Nuorteva stated merely that this might be arranged in line with suggestions he had made.

Pate and Walker realized that the Soviet proposal was unsatisfactory, but further efforts got no better terms. They, therefore, again took up with the Foreign Office the first object of their mission—the protection of American stocks and personnel in the territories controlled by the Soviets. It was obviously necessary that an immediate decision be reached, if the children of these areas were to continue to receive American

<sup>23</sup> *American Joint Distribution Committee in Russia*, January, 1924. Exhibit I. 47-49.

help. The officials of the Foreign Office, however, refused to give the requested guarantee and would commit themselves only to the extent of saying that they would give the matter careful consideration, if approached through diplomatic channels by the American Government in behalf of the A.R.A. Pate and Walker asked to have this reconsidered, but, after having taken it up again with Chicherin, Nuorteva brought back the same answer. Before leaving Moscow, Pate and Walker also endeavored to have the Foreign Office give an explicit definition of what they meant by "supervision" in reference to American relation to the proposed relief. This definition, however, it declined to make.

The result of the negotiations was this: The Soviet Government had refused to consider the A.R.A.'s request to permit the continuation of the feeding in White Russia and the Ukraine, unless approached by the American State Department, an impossible condition in as far as the A.R.A. was concerned.

When they received the final word from the Soviet Foreign Office, Pate and Walker made their way out to Riga and forwarded their reports to London. They felt that some arrangement might possibly be made, but subsequent events were not encouraging. A few months later there was another futile attempt to deliver relief to children within the territory of the Soviet Republic. The armistice negotiations with the Poles at Minsk had broken down at the end of August, but were resumed in Riga on September 14. A month later (October 12), at Riga, the Polish and Soviet representatives signed an armistice agreement and preliminary treaty of peace, by which the city of Minsk, where the A.R.A. had been feeding until interrupted by military operations, became a part of Russian territory. Reports came that the condition of children there was still very bad, and the A.R.A. was asked to reopen its kitchens. It was said, moreover, that the Soviet officials were allowing the Polish Red Cross to send in supplies and to conduct relief. The Soviet was, therefore, again asked to allow the A.R.A. to send in its aid under a similar agreement. The reply to this request stated that the whole matter could be considered only if it were taken up for the A.R.A. by the American State De-



partment directly with the Soviet Government through Chicherin. That is, in 1920, the attitude of the Moscow Government was that while it did not ask for relief, it would accept American help through the A.R.A., but only under conditions which conformed to the political organization of the Soviet state. The Bolsheviks were more interested in establishing diplomatic or trade relations with the United States than in receiving aid from America for Russian children. Their attitude in this regard is admirably expressed in a letter written by L. C. A. K. Martens, unofficial Soviet representative in the United States, in which this paragraph appears:

"While the Soviet Government would gladly receive relief for its suffering population from any disinterested foreign agency, it does not ask for charity in this respect. We ask rather to be allowed to purchase in foreign markets those essential supplies of medicine, soap and other necessities for lack of which men, women and children in Soviet Russia are now suffering. Relief would be welcome; but the suffering would be removed and relief would be unnecessary if the foreign governments would remove their ruthless blockade against the resumption of normal commerce."<sup>24</sup>

In December, 1920, the European Relief Council,<sup>25</sup> of which Hoover was chairman and the A.R.A. a member, initiated a campaign for the collection of \$33,000,000 to enable the constituent organizations to continue until the next harvest the care of the children and adults in Central Europe to whom they had been giving aid during the past year. While the appeal was being carried on, there were demands that certain of the organizations should use part of the funds collected, or secure additional funds for other countries than those for whom the appeal was specifically made, and a separate committee for Irish relief organized a campaign apart from that of the European Relief Council. A demand much more strongly and insistently made was that the A.R.A. take up the responsibility

<sup>24</sup> A letter to the Associate Editor of the Newspaper Enterprise Association, November 18, 1920.

<sup>25</sup> The organizations in the European Relief Council were: American Relief Administration, American Red Cross, American Friends Service Committee (Quakers), Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Knights of Columbus, Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A.

of feeding Russian children as well as those of the Central European states.

There were several committees or associations outside the European Relief Council which were appealing for funds for work in Russia, and some of these appeals took on a decidedly political coloring. They berated the Department of State for its Russian policy, arguing that its past policies of intervention and blockade, and its refusal to resume political or trade relations with Russia were responsible for the present suffering. Attacks on Hoover and the A.R.A. soon became, in connection with the European Relief Council drive, an important part of the agitation. The A.R.A. had refused to give aid to Russian children, it was said, because Hoover and his associates did not approve of the Soviet Government. The A.R.A. had been willing to give assistance to all the enemies of Soviet Russia, but had "hardened their hearts toward the innocent and suffering millions of the great Communist Republic."<sup>26</sup> The American Relief Administration has never sought assurances from the Soviet Government and has never sought to find out the terms under which relief work in Soviet Russia might have been carried on."<sup>27</sup>

This anti-A.R.A. campaign was given the friendly support of the Soviet unofficial representative with the United States, L. C. A. K. Martens, who stated in a letter made public at the time that he did not know "upon what occasion, nor under what circumstances the American Relief Administration has ever applied to the Soviet Government for permission to send

<sup>26</sup> *Medical Relief for Soviet Russia* (Pamphlet). Address delivered at Metropolitan Opera House, Philadelphia, January 18, 1921, by J. L. Magnes; also published in *Soviet Russia*, February 26, 1921. This magazine was the official organ of the Russian Soviet Government Bureau in the United States, until the issue of January 29, 1921, when Martens, the Soviet representative and publisher of the magazine, was deported. Kenneth Durand became publisher in place of Martens. The editorship was retained by Dr. J. W. Hartmann. The issue of January 22nd stated: "The editorial policy of the paper will not change, nor will the character of the contents."

In connection with this reference to the "suffering millions" it is interesting to note that H. N. Brailsford, a friendly observer in Russia at this time, wrote, "In Russia there is no parallel to the tragedy of child life which is the worst of all the plagues of Central Europe." *The Russian Workers' Republic*, 22, New York, 1921.

<sup>27</sup> In an editorial, "Mr. Hoover, Feed Russia!" the *New York Nation*, February 16, 1921, said: "We cannot understand the conception of charity which selects children to feed according to the politics or even the actions of their parents."

relief to Soviet Russia," and further that there was "nothing to prevent the Relief Administration from shipping supplies direct to Soviet Russia. These supplies would be gladly received and fairly distributed by the Soviet Government. If the American Relief Administration desired to inspect the manner of distribution, I am sure that this could be arranged." Such a statement, blandly disregarding the negotiations that had taken place, may have had its use as propaganda, but it did not promote understanding, nor bring food and clothing to Russian children who were hungry and cold.

The controversy itself had only slight importance at the time and is significant only because it marked the beginning of a series of systematic attacks on the A.R.A. from radical and Communist resources, which continued until the end of the relief operations. As will appear, though the Communists and the apologists of Communism in Russia clung tenaciously to the thesis that Hoover and the A.R.A. were bent on the destruction of the Soviet Government and injury to Russia, they changed their explanation as to how these ends were being sought. First, as has been noted, it was by withholding relief; next, by delivering relief; then by sabotaging relief and by misrepresenting the capacity of Russian transport; and finally, by minimizing the need of relief in 1922-1923. Thus staving off attacks on the home front became almost as much a matter of routine as chartering ships.



## CHAPTER III

AT RIGA: 1921

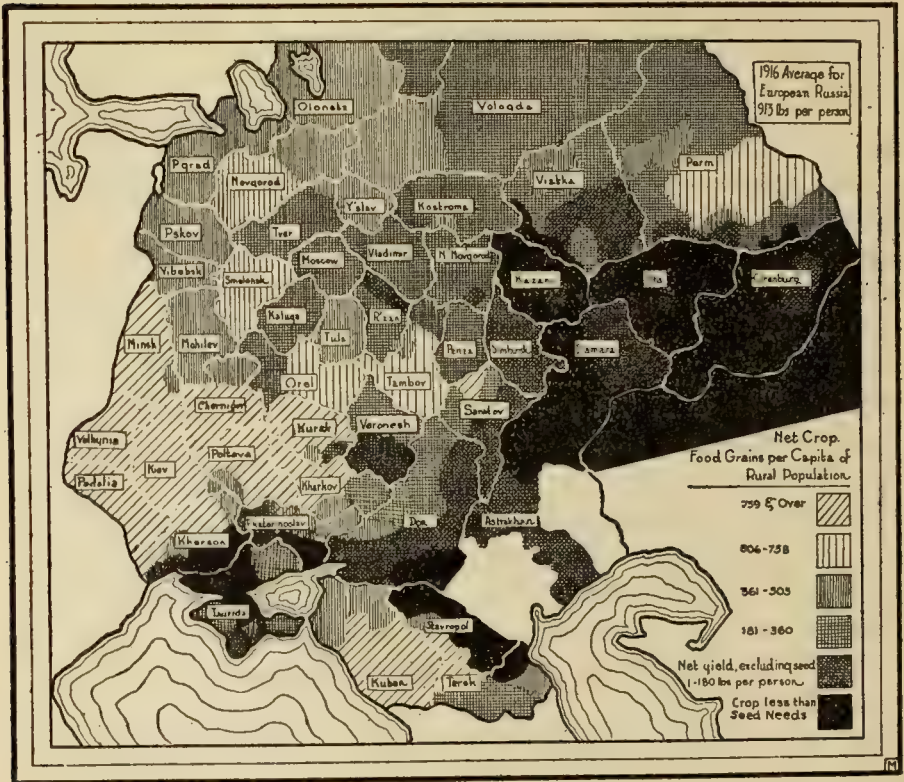
### GORKY'S APPEAL—"SEND BREAD AND MEDICINE"

THE imminence of the great famine was not realized in Europe or America. Russia, surrounded by a wall of suspicion and enmity, was almost completely cut off from the world, which had to depend for its information on either Soviet official communiqués, or the trickle of news that reached the west through subterranean channels, where it became colored and corrupted. In fact, neither source was reliable, and such journalists and other investigators as the Soviets allowed to enter the country were persons whose sympathies were to be counted upon and whose paths were carefully charted to lead to places which the Communists felt it desirable for the visitors to see and the world to know.<sup>1</sup> The effective Russian censorship kept the news of the drought of the spring of 1921 from being known, but it could not conceal the progressive deterioration of Russian economy from the world. Hoover and his associates in the A.R.A., in spite of the rebuff of 1920, were still hopeful of eventually being able to give a helping hand to the Russian people. They saw, more clearly perhaps than many, that Russia would sooner or later need help on a scale beyond the scope of ordinary charity, and that ultimately the Communist Government would also realize this and be ready to accept public aid on a basis on which it could be effectively given.<sup>2</sup> This was not a case of clairvoyance,

<sup>1</sup> This was strikingly illustrated by the experiences of the British Labor Delegation which visited Russia in 1920. See the comments of Mrs. Philip Snowden, a member of the delegation, in her *Through Bolshevik Russia*, London, 1920, particularly Chapter IV.

<sup>2</sup> Hoover had forecast the effect of Communist economic policy on production as early as April, 1919. See statement to the press, page 21.

but merely an understanding of the economic forces at work—the steady degeneration in production—and, early in June, Hoover suggested to Walter Lyman Brown that the European organization of the A.R.A. be prepared for such an emergency, with the result that when the time for action came, supplies and personnel were ready to move at the word.



Food Map of Russia, 1921.

By the spring of 1921 production in Russia had fallen so low that the cities and the “producing regions”<sup>3</sup> faced actual famine, and workers and peasants, menaced by hunger and exasperated by Communist restrictions, threatened the stability of the Bolshevik power. In March the Communists finally abandoned certain vital principles of their doctrines and adopted the New Economic Policy with the aim of establish-

<sup>3</sup> Sections of Russia normally producing more food than is consumed and situated generally in the southern and eastern parts of the country.

ing not Communism, but state capitalism.<sup>4</sup> But before this change of policy had time to show its effects in increased production vast areas of the producing regions in eastern and southern Russia were stricken by drought.<sup>5</sup> Russia had suffered from droughts before, but in 1921 there were no reserves in the afflicted regions, nor any surpluses elsewhere which could be used to fend off starvation.

By June the situation in the afflicted regions, the hunger and panic of the peasants, threatened to depopulate the villages and overwhelm the cities with starved, diseased refugees. Official Moscow began to recognize the full significance of the disaster. Clearly the loosening of the vise of military Communism was not enough. Further concessions must be made if Russia were to survive. Not only must they relax the censorship to admit the full extent of the disaster, but they must ask the world—the world of capitalists, exploiters, and bourgeois hypocrites—for aid. *Pravda*, on June 26, admitted that famine raged among a population “of about 25,000,000.” The European press began to publish grisly rumors of horrors, but the appeal for help was not made until July 11.

By what internal struggles the Communist Party leaders brought themselves to make this appeal, they have not thought it necessary for the world to know. Probably it was a compromise—as were most policies announced with seeming unanimity by the Party—between the Die Hards, who refused to give up their principles, even if the peasants had to die for them, and the more flexible and humane opportunists, who could see no advantage in the survival of Communism if Russia were ruined in the process. The compromise in this case was in the manner in which the appeal was made. The Soviet Government itself did not at first ask for help; it allowed the Patriarch Tikhon and Maxim Gorky to do so. Gorky's

<sup>4</sup>The steps in the deterioration of production during the war, revolution, and the period of “military Communism” are treated in greater detail in Chapter XXI.

<sup>5</sup>The area of drought in eastern Russia (the seriousness of the situation in south Russia was not realized for some time) was roughly 800 miles from Viatka in the north to Astrakhan in the south, and 350 miles wide at the widest point, between Penza and Ufa. It embraced one of the most fertile and hence one of the most thickly populated parts of Russia. A population of about 35,000,000, over a third of the total population of European Russia, lived in the drought-stricken areas.



message, dated July 13, appeared in the press, July 23. It was addressed "To All Honest People," told of the crop failure which threatened starvation to millions of Russians, and ended with the appeal: "I ask all honest European and American people for prompt aid to the Russian people. Give bread and medicine." <sup>6</sup>

### HOOVER'S REPLY

Hoover, with the approval of the A.R.A. directors, sent to Gorky on July 23, 1921, the following telegram:

"I have read with great feeling your appeal to Americans for charitable assistance to the starving and sick people of Russia, more particularly the children. To the whole American people the absolute *sine qua non* of any assistance must be the immediate release of the Americans now held prisoners in Russia, and adequate provision for administration. Once these steps have been taken the American Relief Administration, a purely voluntary association, and an entirely unofficial organization of which I am chairman, together with other coöperating charitable American organizations supported wholly through the generosity of the American people, have funds in hand, by which assistance for the children and for the sick could be undertaken immediately. This organization previously during the last year intimated its willingness to undertake this service as one of simple humanity, disengaged absolutely from any political, social, or religious motives. However, for obvious administrative reasons it has been and is compelled to stipulate for certain undertakings. Subject to the acceptance of these undertakings, we are prepared to enter upon this work. We are to-day caring for three and one half millions of children in ten different countries and would be willing to furnish necessary supplement of food, clothing, and medical supplies to a million children in Russia as rapidly as organization could be effected. The administrative conditions that we are obliged to make are identically the same as those that have been established in every one of the twenty-three countries where operations have been conducted one time or another in care of upwards of eight million children.

"The conditions are that the Moscow Soviet authorities should give a direct statement to the Relief Administration representatives in Riga:

"A.—That there is need of our assistance.

"B.—That American representatives of the Relief Administration shall be given full liberty to come and go and move about Russia.

<sup>6</sup> Full text of the Gorky appeal is in the *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XVI, 2.

"C.—That these members shall be allowed to organize the necessary local committees and local assistance free from governmental interference.

"D.—That they shall be given free transportation, storage and handling of imported supplies with priority over other traffic, that the authorities shall assign necessary buildings and equipment and fuel free of charge.

"E.—That in addition to the imported food, clothing, and medicines, the children and the sick must be given the same rations of such local supplies as are given to the rest of the population.

"F.—That the Relief Administration must have the assurance of noninterference of the government with the liberty of all of its members.

"On its side the Relief Administration is prepared as usual to make a free and frank undertaking:

"First. That it will, within its resources supply all children and invalids, alike without regard to race, creed or social status.

"Second. That its representatives and assistants in Russia will engage in no political activities.

"I desire to repeat that these conditions are in no sense extraordinary, but are identical with those laid down and readily accepted by the twenty-three other governments in whose territories we have operated."

The promptness and clarity of this message established the non-political character of the American offer and placed the A.R.A. in a position to escape the hampering complications of diplomatic entanglement which defeated the more ambitious European schemes of relief.

On July 25 Gorky announced from Petrograd that the Soviet Government would accept Hoover's offer, and on the 31st he transmitted the formal acceptance of the Russian Government, signed by Kamenev, as Chairman of the Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee for Helping the Famine Stricken Population. To Kamenev's suggestion that the negotiation of the relief agreement should be begun as soon as possible at Moscow, Riga, or Reval, Hoover replied immediately by directing Walter Lyman Brown to go to Riga.

#### LEFT-WING ALARUMS AND EXCURSIONS

Hoover and his associates were not so naïve as to imagine that the proposal to give relief in Russia would be received

with universal acclaim or unanimous approval. On the contrary, they realized that it would arouse more bitter controversy than the struggle against hunger in Germany and other ex-enemy countries waged by the A.R.A. in 1919, and that to follow a neutral, impartial course between the lines of Russian political controversy would make the A.R.A. and its members the recipients of the brickbats and mud of abuse that the opponents and the defenders of the Soviet Government were energetically exchanging. The brickbats and the mud began to fly, however, with promptness and viciousness beyond the most sanguine expectation.

The radicals and "liberals" who had attacked Hoover for not giving relief to Russia, now attacked him with redoubled vigor as soon as he did so. An explanation of this will presently be offered. In the meantime the Gorky appeal and the prompt answer from Hoover gave the anti-Soviet propagandists their innings, and they made the most of them. Communism, they cried, had ruined Russia and now America must come forward to save the Russian people from the effects of Bolshevik madness. This triumphant shout was not relished by the radicals any more than was the necessity of accepting alms from the American bourgeoisie, through the hands of an organization whose leader had made no secret of his opinion of Communist economics and his disgust at Bolshevik practice. Moscow had to swallow the disgusting pill because the country was desperately sick. American comrades found the swallowing more difficult. Hoover's reply to Gorky might mean a gain for the Russians, but it was a loss to the pro-Soviet propagandists, for it deprived them of one of their chief appeals for sympathy for Russia,—Hoover's inhuman neglect of the suffering millions who lived under the Red Flag.

#### THE BASIS OF ATTACK ON THE A.R.A.: HUNGARY IN 1919

At first the attack was uncertain and indecisive—a complaint that Hoover's terms—in the reply to Gorky—were unreasonably harsh,<sup>7</sup> but there came to hand a weapon of attack

<sup>7</sup> *The Nation* (New York), August 10, 1921, 139. "It is with a sense of shame that we read that Mr. Hoover . . . made American aid contingent upon political conditions." Also the *New York Call*, August 18, 1921.



which could not have been better suited to their purposes if they had fashioned it themselves. This weapon was a series of articles called "Stemming the Red Tide," written by T. T. C. Gregory, who in 1919 was in charge of the A.R.A. work in southern Europe, and appearing in *World's Work* in April, May, and June (1921). The final article told of the fall of Bela Kun's Soviet government in Hungary for which one got the impression Gregory and Hoover were primarily responsible.<sup>8</sup> The inference drawn and lingeringly dwelt upon by the radicals and liberals was that Hoover had deliberately, brazenly used food for the starving, with the machinery of the A.R.A., to destroy the Soviet Government of Hungary. The *Soviet Russia* magazine greeted the discovery of this article with glee and asked permission to reprint it. Beyond indicating that, "there is a very general feeling in liberal circles in America that Mr. Hoover's Relief Administration may be pursuing an ulterior motive in going into Russia to succor the starving population," and suggesting that, "there are many persons in America who will not be inclined to give any contributions to famine relief through his (Hoover's) organization,"<sup>9</sup> it left to the "liberal circles" and others less obviously connected with the Communist headquarters—to bring out the heavy artillery. This they proceeded to do with gusto.

The argument of the liberals followed this line: Since Hoover is an enemy of Bolshevism in general and used relief supplies to destroy the Bolsheviki in Europe, his motives in giving relief to Russia are suspect; therefore, many will prefer to support relief through other channels.<sup>10</sup> This suited Com-

<sup>8</sup> Rose Wilder Lane, in *The Making of Herbert Hoover*, New York, 1920, says: "It was Herbert Hoover in Paris and his man Captain Gregory on the ground who made the counter-revolution in Budapest, made it with their tremendous power of food control and a skillful handling of the political situation." The author's purpose was no doubt the best, but her facts are askew. This, however, was dug up and used in the attack on Hoover and the A.R.A. while they were taking the first steps in Russian relief.

<sup>9</sup> *Soviet Russia*, September, 1921, 96-97. For the connection of this paper with the Soviet Government see Chapter II, note 26.

<sup>10</sup> For example: *The New Republic*, August 30, 1920. "Mr. Hoover's implacable hostility to Bolshevism and the fact of the widely advertised coup whereby Captain Gregory helped to turn the communists out of Hungary, have led many people to believe that Mr. Hoover's charity for all has on occasions been tainted with malice towards some and such people will not give readily through his hands." And on September 14, 1921: "Naturally those who most

munist partisans outside of Russia down to the ground. It would, they had reason to hope, divert support to their own relief organizations, which made no secret of their political objectives and it offered possibilities for political propaganda. It is not intended to imply that the "liberals" deliberately aimed to strengthen the radical relief bodies at the expense of the A.R.A., but it is a fact that they did not view with any alarm relief groups which proclaimed that their appeal was to "working class interests rather than to humanitarian pity,"—and did view with alarm any relief by the A.R.A.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to these liberal warnings, radical groups took active steps to save Russia from the A.R.A. menace. They held a meeting on August 14 at the Lexington Theatre in New York under the auspices of the American Labor Alliance, ostensibly to raise funds for Russian relief. The speakers, however, were concerned chiefly with easing their minds of their opinion of Hoover, who, it appeared, was responsible for the invasions of Russia, the blockade, the economic breakdown, and presumably, though this was not stated, the failure of rainfall. The meeting passed a significant resolution that relief from capitalistic sources should be accepted only in so far as it was administered solely by the Soviet Government. The National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party warned members of the Party against the A.R.A., informing them that, "it is known agents of this organization under the guise of assisting the masses of Hungary used its machinery for counter-revolutionary purposes. It was

sympathize with Russia and are most inclined to help her resent Mr. Hoover's refusal of assistance in the past. . . . Undoubtedly to the mass of Americans the course ascribed to him in his capacity of relief agent of fighting and betraying a revolutionary government and leaving its territory open to invasion and spoliation is an altogether commendable exercise of power and guile." *The Nation* (New York), October 12, while professing to believe nothing of the kind, observed that, "If Mr. Hoover's creed in Russia were his creed in Hungary as set forth in Mr. Gregory's article, he would use his food to overturn the Soviet Government and would disregard all the ordinary obligations of good faith in the bargain." This paper had discovered another motive, ". . . some of its (A.R.A.'s) workers considered its relief as a form of propaganda for future American trade in Russia." Moreover, it agreed that many might prefer to give through other organizations. Henry Ford's *Dearborn Independent* (September 21, 1921), also disapproved, but for more general reasons.

<sup>11</sup> It is interesting in the light of these "liberal" fears that subsequently certain members of the A.R.A. Russian Unit, far from attempting to overturn the Soviet régime, became advocates of its political recognition.

a potent factor in establishing the autocratic régime in that country." <sup>12</sup>

With regard to Bolshevism in 1919, Hoover's attitude needs no analysis. He fought it with all his strength.<sup>13</sup> Every pound of flour, every tin of milk, every ounce of fat that he drove through the blockade into Germany or distributed in the newly formed states was a vastly more effective weapon against Bolshevism than the machine guns and tanks delivered to the counter-revolutionary armies of Russian Whites. But in this he was not denying to the harassed people the right to choose between a government of soviets and a democracy; he was fighting the real manifestations of Bolshevism, famine, bloodshed, chaos. To the bewildered people of Central Europe the emissaries of Bolshevism did not offer merely a new

<sup>12</sup> *New York Mail*, September 3, 1921, Report of meeting in Chicago, September 1.

<sup>13</sup> The purpose of this relief in 1919 was frequently stated by Hoover at the time and since. Replying to a critic of the A.R.A., Hoover wrote:

"Please don't plague me in these times with a dose of polemics. A private individual is absolutely helpless against an editor who doesn't have to check his facts.

"You have slid to second base by running away from your original charge, of which you seem to have no basis, and now you mix America's private charities with her official organizations and national policies—which I have never done, or allowed to be done.

"If you do wish to discuss Government policies, and wish to go back two years to the period of the armistice (in order to try a run to third base) I am glad to say that my understanding is that the whole of American policies during the liquidation of the armistice was to contribute everything it could to prevent Europe from going Bolshevik or being overrun by their armies. I believe this contribution was one of the greatest services that Americans accomplished to the world as witnessed by the comparative situation in Europe with that of Russia today. So I ask the umpire to declare you out.

"If you feel keenly about the overturn of Bela Kun—in which Captain Gregory's account does not wholly agree with my understanding—would you also note that it was the Trades Unions who really upset Bela Kun and that the attempt of the reactionaries to regain control after a few days of Trades Union ministry was promptly defeated by allied action and the Trades Union ministry restored to control? If they backslid subsequently it can hardly be laid to anybody's door on this side.

"You are aware that I and many others opposed any offensive action or pressure against Russia itself during that period or subsequently, for Russia must cure herself. We now wish to save the lives of a few children from Bolshevism and are content to allow them to go on with their promises of improvement of general living standards without interference from us.

"But why argue it? Whatever was done for good or evil was not done by America's charity organization except so far as saving the lives of children rains on the blest and the unblest."

Letter to Oswald Garrison Villard, Editor of the *Nation* (New York), 17 August, 1921.



political system, but escape from the weight of misery piled up by the war. Thus Bolshevism prospered as starvation and despair spread; it halted when food came and hope revived.

The effectiveness of these relief measures has been attested not only by the leaders of the states that received aid, but by no less of an authority than Trotzky, who has attributed the failure of the world revolution in Europe in part to the faith in the help of the "Uncle from America."

With respect to the various charges in regard to Hungary as noted above, it is perhaps necessary to set forth the following facts:

1.—The blockade of Hungary both before and during the communist régime was not established by the A.R.A., but was a political matter determined by the Supreme Council.<sup>14</sup>

2.—In the negotiations that took place in Vienna with Boehm, the Hungarian Minister, with regard to the substitution of a Trade Union-Socialist government for the Communist, Gregory, Prince Borghese (Italian), and Colonel Cunningham (British) did not represent the A.R.A., but the Supreme Council.<sup>15</sup>

3.—No American relief supplies were involved in these transactions. The appropriation under which the relief operations executed by Gregory had been financed had expired June 30, one month before Bela Kun left Budapest. The food which Gregory promised to buy for the new Socialist government belonged to private interests and was in storage in Trieste.<sup>16</sup>

4.—The real cause of the collapse of the Bela Kun régime was the failure of its internal policy, manifested by riots, sabotage, and mutinies and the debacle of the Hungarian armies after their defeat by the Rumanians on the Theiss (July 20-26) and the rapid advance of the Rumanians on the capital which they occupied on August 8.<sup>17</sup> But before the Rumanians reached Budapest,

<sup>14</sup> "This raises the whole question as to whether or not in the present situation the provisioning of Hungary should proceed, and it involves political issues which are beyond myself and my colleagues to determine." From a letter from Hoover to President Wilson, 31 March, 1919, protesting against interference with A.R.A. shipments to Hungary by French and Serbs.

<sup>15</sup> Resolution of the Supreme Council, 21 July, 1919, No. 5M. "It is agreed: That agents of the Allied and Associated Powers at Vienna shall obtain all information possible relative to a visit in this city by General Boehm, who is said to have declared that he would attempt to create a movement in Hungary to transform the present Communist Government of Bela Kun into a Socialist Government. The truth and significance of this suggestion should be verified."

<sup>16</sup> This is clearly stated by Gregory. *World's Work*, June, 1921, p. 162.

<sup>17</sup> This general course of military events is not subject to controversy. There is a brief account in Temperley, *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, I, 355-6, and IV, 489-90.

Bela Kun had left. On August 1 he surrendered the government to the Social Democrats and accompanied by his friends and an Austrian diplomatic representative departed for Vienna on a special train. And so ended the soviet government of Hungary.<sup>18</sup>

As for the effects of the Gregory articles and their reverberations, the most important was that they furnished a convenient explanation of the Russian Soviet Government's efforts to dominate the A.R.A. Russian Unit. It is probable, moreover, that these articles accentuated the suspicion and hostility with which the strict Communist regarded all bourgeois relief work. Finally, the alleged Hoover-Gregory coup gave the Communists and their apologists a made-to-order explanation of their Hungarian failure.<sup>19</sup> Previously they had had to rely on generalities—the allied blockade and the like—now they could be specific. For propaganda purposes this explanation was ideal, but it is doubtful if Bolshevik leaders in Moscow took it seriously. They knew Bela Kun. After his Austrian internment the "Hungarian Dictator" returned to Russia and was sent to the Crimea to liquidate what remained of opposition after the counter-revolutionary forces had been defeated. This he did at a cost variously estimated as from 50,000 to 120,000 lives, an appalling slaughter even in a time of slaughter.<sup>20</sup>

#### NEGOTIATIONS AT RIGA

While the Communists and others in America and Europe were raising the old cry *timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*, much more important events were taking place in Riga where, on August 10, Walter Lyman Brown, assisted by C. J. C. Quinn,

<sup>18</sup> The Social Democratic government was overturned on 6 August by the Archduke Joseph with Friedrich as premier, with the aid of the Rumanians. The Supreme Council brought pressure to bear and the Archduke withdrew on 24 August and Friedrich was succeeded by Huszar. The National Assembly elected in January, 1920, in turn, elected Admiral Horthy head of the state as "Governor" on 1 March. The "White Terror," of which much has been written and to which references are made in quotations from the attacks on the A.R.A., began shortly after Horthy assumed office, long after the general relief work of the A.R.A. had ended.

<sup>19</sup> Others with no shadow of Communist leanings have embalmed this explanation in their books. For example, R. S. Baker—*Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement*, II, 352, and A. L. P. Dennis, *The Foreign Policies of Soviet Russia*, 349, New York, 1924.

<sup>20</sup> P. A. Sorokin, *The Sociology of Revolution*, 142, footnote 7, Philadelphia, 1925. See also Louise Bryant's *Mirrors of Moscow*, 33-34, New York, 1923, for the reflection of Bela Kun at a later day.

P. H. Carroll and J. C. Miller (chiefs respectively of the A.R.A. missions to Poland, Germany, and the Baltic) sat down with Maxim Litvinov, Soviet Assistant Commissar of Foreign Affairs, to work out the terms of the agreement under which the A.R.A. was to carry on its operations in Russia. On his arrival in Riga Brown presented a draft agreement based on the principles stated in Hoover's reply to Gorky and accepted by the Soviet authorities. Litvinov immediately agreed to most of the articles in this draft. There was, however, one principle regarded by both parties in the negotiations as fundamental and affecting several articles in the drafted document which required discussion. This was the principle of freedom of action of the A.R.A. in Russia which affected the following matters: The right to form local committees for the distribution of relief in accordance with the practices of the A.R.A. in other countries; the number of Americans to be admitted to Russia and the restrictions on their movements there; the right of the Soviet authorities to search American premises and persons and to require the withdrawal of members of the organization accused of political activity; the areas in which the A.R.A. could deliver relief. Although these matters had been covered by Hoover's telegram to Gorky, the Soviet negotiators were reluctant to confirm in the agreement the application of this principle of freedom of action. Litvinov took the position that Russia was in a state of disturbance and revolt; that there were no neutrals in the country; and that the creation of organizations outside the control of the Soviet Government might result in counter-revolutionary projects under the guise of relief committees. Brown, on the other hand, emphatically declared that the A.R.A. did not intend and would not tolerate on the part of its American representatives or its Russian committees, any political activity whatever; that its sole object was to save as many lives as possible; and Brown insisted, that the basic conditions of freedom of action as laid down in Hoover's original offer must be adhered to if this purpose were to be effectively carried out. He showed Litvinov the following instructions cabled by Hoover on August 9, before the negotiations had begun:



"In case of satisfactory negotiations and upon the entry of our representatives into Russia I wish you to impress upon each one of them the supreme importance of their keeping entirely aloof not only from action but even from discussion of political and social questions. Our people are not Bolsheviks, but our Mission is solely to save lives and any participation even in discussion will only lead to suspicion of our objects. In selection of local committees and Russian staff we wish to be absolutely neutral and neutrality implies appointment from every group in Russia and a complete insistence that children of all parentage have equal treatment."

The A.R.A. must not be put in a position where its work could be used for political purposes by any party, either Communist or anti-Communist, or where its personnel could be selected by the Soviet Government through the process of elimination. The solution of this difficulty took time.

Meanwhile Riga had become the point on the map to which the eyes of the world were for the moment directed. Thither flocked journalists of all descriptions prepared to make the most of the success or the failure of the negotiations. Less in evidence were diplomatic agents of European powers, slightly suspicious of this sudden American gesture. Still less in view, but present nevertheless, were mysterious gentlemen with projects of their own which might prosper should the Russians open the gate in their wall of exclusion to admit relief.

As time went on, tension increased. There was an excited undercurrent of prophecy and speculation as to the probable breakdown of the conference. Rumors that the breakdown had actually occurred mysteriously appeared in the press in odd corners of Europe. Old interventionists were repeating their well-worn credo that any relations with the Bolsheviks were impossible. Both parties in the conference realized that an agreement must be reached quickly, if it were to be reached at all. With this in mind the conference worked long and laboriously the night of August 17. Sufficient progress was made to enable the negotiators to make their final communications with their headquarters on the 18th. A short meeting on Friday the 19th settled the remaining points, and at 11:30 on the 20th, Brown and Litvinov signed the completed document in the presence of Latvian officials, newspaper men,

and others.<sup>21</sup> The speeches, without which no such occasion is complete, followed. Litvinov made the most of his opportunities to give the affair a political significance. Brown followed and very deliberately indicated that as far as the A.R.A. was concerned the Riga Agreement had no political significance whatever.

The negotiation of this agreement was a difficult business. In the discussions the words, "food is a weapon" were constantly on Litvinov's lips. Recognition of the truth of this was at bottom the principal difficulty in the differences of opinion in regard to the control of relief. None better than the Communists knew the effectiveness of food as a weapon, for they had used it with remarkable success against those classes which opposed them. The Soviets had no idea of allowing food they did not control to be used against them. The A.R.A., on the other hand, was equally determined not to allow the Communists to withhold or bestow American food as punishment or reward for political activity. That these difficulties were overcome is a sufficient tribute to the skill and good judgment of Brown and Litvinov and their associates in this conference.

The ink was scarcely dry on the Agreement when Brown gave the orders for the first movement from Riga, Danzig, and Hamburg, of food supplies and personnel to Russia. So prompt was this movement, that the advance party of the A.R.A. reached Moscow before the Soviet officials with whom they were to work had familiarized themselves with the terms of the Agreement.

#### OTHER PROPOSALS FOR RUSSIAN RELIEF

The interchange of telegrams between Gorky and Hoover and the subsequent negotiations at Riga between Brown and Litvinov not only aroused a great deal of speculation and interest among the chancelleries of Europe, but inspired immediate activity of other relief agencies. While the Riga negotiations were in progress no less than twelve representatives of different nations arrived on the scene, as well as repre-

<sup>21</sup> See Appendix A, Doc. 1, for text of Riga Agreement.

sentatives of the International Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies. In the meantime, a joint committee representing the International Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies had called a meeting of national relief associations at Geneva for August 15. In replying to the invitation to the A.R.A. to have a representative at this meeting, Hoover cabled the willingness of the A.R.A. to coöperate in the matter of Russian relief, and suggested that, in order that the coördination might be successful, each association represented at the Geneva Conference specify the number of persons it was prepared to feed until the next harvest, at what date these associations could undertake actual relief, and the amount of the resources which each association had available for this purpose.<sup>22</sup> Obviously, the coördination between

<sup>22</sup> To Gustave Ador:

"I have the honor to acknowledge your invitation to the American Relief Administration to send a representative to a conference of private charitable bodies to be held at Geneva on August fifteenth for consideration of measures for relief of Russian famine. The great concern felt by the American people for the suffering in Russia is evidenced by their general approval of the initiative already taken by this Association, and I am sure that they would wish the American Relief Administration to support and coöperate in every substantial effort which can be made by other nations to further relieve the situation. This Association will therefore endeavor to send their representative to Geneva although the notice is short and our European Directors are en route to Riga.

"If this discussion is to become of fruitful result it seems to me that we must frankly face the real issues involved. FIRST, that the famine in Russia is of an extent entirely beyond the resources of all the available private charities of the world especially in these times of economic hardship. SECOND, even were funds available for food, the relief of Russia involves the rehabilitation of transportation, of agriculture, and industry, necessitating measures again beyond the reach of charity. THIRD, that the causes of the famine are such that they will be recurrent every year until there is much further change in the economic system of Russia.

"On the other hand, I am convinced that private charity should not be remiss in saving all the lives it possibly can, thus to mitigate the situation so far as humanly possible. The available charitable funds in America for this purpose have been subscribed almost exclusively for children and for medical supplies, and we have on the assumption of satisfactory arrangement with the Soviet authorities, already initiated large shipments to save as many children as our resources will permit. We can also secure some support to adults.

"It appears to me that in discussing coordination of charitable bodies of different nationalities it must be borne in mind that provision of private charity carries with it an obligation for distribution and administration, the responsibility of which cannot be delegated, nor can the responsibility involved in the administration in famine areas be carried on with any degree of efficiency and discipline in the hands of mixed boards. Moreover, it is my belief that the experience of the past seven years has fully equipped each



the various societies could best be effected on the ground in Russia, and only after it was known what resources could be counted upon. Over one hundred delegates, representing twenty-two countries and thirty organizations, met under the chairmanship of Gustav Ador on August 15. Gardner Richardson, Chief of its Mission to Austria, represented the A.R.A. The Conference passed a number of resolutions concerning the general policy to be pursued, but produced nothing definite as regards resources. Most of the associations stated that their resources would depend upon the collections which they might be able to make for Russian relief. European governments and the International Committee for Relief Credits<sup>23</sup> were asked to consider the possibility of appropriating part of the balance of credits in favor of Russia. Finally, the conference asked Nansen and Hoover to serve as High Commissioners of the International Committee for Russian Relief. Dr. Nansen, then on his way to Riga, accepted the appointment as High Commissioner on August 18, and hurried on to Moscow, where he negotiated a separate agreement for relief which was signed by himself and Chicherin on the 27th.

nationality with experience and skill, and that each country possesses men of ample knowledge of special Russian conditions.

"There can be no question as to the desirability of coordination of the work of the different national associations. It appears to me that the basis of such coördination should be, **FIRST**, the determination of a specific number of children or adults or the special branch of relief, the financial burden of which would be positively undertaken by each association; **SECOND**, the assignment of particular work or field to each association within its resources. In this light it seems to me the most constructive service that could come out of such a conference as you have suggested would be the requirement of a definite statement as to exactly how many persons each national association would undertake to guarantee in subsistence until the next harvest, at what date they could undertake actual relief, the amount of money resources of such associations definitely available for this purpose. Without this data it appears to me that the conference can be of no practical result, while with this knowledge the actual work of coördination of the efforts of all societies could subsequently be determined by the heads of the organizations upon the ground in Russia itself. Generally it appears to me that coördination of distribution can only be practical after actual contact with the situation in Russia and that this step cannot be taken to any purpose without a prior and immediate knowledge of what resources can be relied upon. I have the honor to be, yours faithfully.—(Signed) HERBERT HOOVER."

<sup>23</sup> A committee formed at an international conference at Paris, April 21-22, 1920, to consider economic conditions of central and eastern Europe (excluding Germany) and to establish machinery for advancing credits. The northern neutrals, as well as the Allies, participated in the scheme designed particularly to benefit Austria, Hungary, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Jugo-Slavia, and the Baltic States.

There were important points in which the Nansen-Chicherin agreement differed from the Brown-Litvinov. In the first place, the Nansen agreement provided that the High Commissioner act as an intermediary between Russia and western European nations in the negotiation of credits for relief. This agreement, moreover, placed the control of the operations in Russia in a committee of two in Moscow, consisting of a representative of Dr. Nansen and a representative of the Soviet Government. The A.R.A. agreement contained specific guarantee of its privilege to form local committees for distribution, and of the protection of personnel against arrest, personal search or detention.

Because of his position as a member of the American cabinet, and because of the quasi-official character of the International Committee, Hoover could not accept the position of High Commissioner. Furthermore, the differences in the two relief agreements compelled the A.R.A. to keep its operations and relations with the Soviet Government distinct from the International Committee. There were rumors circulated at the time that Nansen had threatened to resign because of disagreements with the A.R.A. This Nansen and Brown immediately denied. In fact, at the very time, Nansen had asked the support of the A.R.A. in securing replacements of rye, which he planned to import into Russia from Estonia, and had been assured of the willing coöperation of the A.R.A.

The interest which European governments had taken in the relief negotiations was very shortly reflected in official action under the inspiration of the Allied Supreme Council, which created an International Commission for Russian Relief, on which the principal allies were represented. There was a meeting of this body in Paris on August 30. France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, and Belgium were officially represented, and Walter Lyman Brown of the A.R.A. attended as an unofficial observer for the United States. Of those officially represented, the British alone seemed to have a definite idea of what the commission might do and how it should go about it. Political aspects decidedly overshadowed relief and soon proved Hoover's wisdom in maintaining independence. The principal decision was that nothing could be done until the

situation in Russia had been adequately investigated, and that in the event it was ultimately decided that the governments represented should take part in relief, credits might be granted to the Russian Government in case it would "recognize its responsibility for the discharge of existing debts and other obligations and liabilities, and that adequate security should be given in the future." Some of the representatives were very positive in their belief that no effective relief could be delivered in Russia unless transportation systems were virtually taken over by an Allied commission.

The principal achievement of this meeting was the drafting of a note to the Russian Government, which, whether by accident or design, was certain to arouse its wrath in an extraordinary degree. In the first place, the note was signed by M. Joseph Noulens, former French diplomatic representative in Russia, who of all foreign representatives during the revolution was perhaps the most thoroughly hated by the Bolsheviks. In the second place, the note gave no indication of what aid might eventually be given by the five powers, but indicated that nothing whatever could be done until a commission of some thirty persons, representing each of the five governments, and containing experts on famine relief, railway transportation, sanitation and public health, agriculture and administration, a representative of the Joint Committee of the International Red Cross, and necessary interpreters could investigate. The Commission would study such matters as area and extent of famine; the extent, present and prospective, of migration; the extent, present and prospective, of epidemic disease; the extent to which the cultivation of the famine area is, and can be undertaken both this year and next; the extent and location of surplus stocks of food; the transport situation generally; the measures being undertaken by the Russian Government to deal with these difficult problems; and finally, would make recommendations as to the necessary steps to make the organization of relief most effective, and as to the commodities which were most necessary and the areas in which such commodities were required.

It is difficult to believe that such a message could have been sent to Moscow unless the governments were convinced



that the Soviets were about to collapse and would be willing to accept anything which the Allies might have to offer. They were decidedly mistaken in this. On September 7, Chicherin replied to the note at length and with gusto. Much of the reply he devoted to a rehearsal of the alleged crimes of M. Noulens in Russia. A few sentences from the document of several pages may be taken which strikingly set forth the Soviet attitude.

"The name of M. Noulens is in itself a whole program."

"When millions of men are without food and starving, M. Noulens' commission proposes instead of collecting bread, to collect statistical data on Soviet Russia."

"Neither the A. R. A., which has already begun to send food to the starving children, nor Dr. Nansen as High Commissioner of the Red Cross has thought it necessary or possible to compel the hungry masses to wait for assistance until these profound researches can be completed."

"To all practical and serious endeavors, the Soviet Government will always give every satisfaction and help. As to the proposals of M. Noulens, the Soviet Government can only regard them as a monstrous mockery against the starving masses."

The International Commission never replied to the Chicherin note. It contented itself with calling another meeting at Paris on September 16, at which it passed a vote of confidence in M. Noulens and, presumably, registered another moral victory over the Bolsheviks. Another meeting, however, was necessary to give the enterprise a decent burial. This was held at Brussels and was attended by representatives of twelve governments. It passed more resolutions reaffirming what had already been affirmed; requested each government to appeal for the support of its national Red Cross Society; asked Dr. Nansen to change his agreement with the Soviet Government to make it correspond with that negotiated by the A.R.A.; and urged the several governments to indicate what kind of support they proposed to give to the relief of Russia.<sup>24</sup> This was the end of the International Commission for Russian Relief and the last attempt of the European Governments to develop a joint relief program.

<sup>24</sup> *Commission Internationale de Secours, à la Russie*, Procès Verbaux. Séances tenues à Paris, les 30-31, août et le 1 septembre; 15 septembre; à Bruxelles les 6, 7, et 8 octobre, 1921.



PART II  
OPERATIONS  
THE FAMINE YEAR  
1921-1922





## CHAPTER IV

### THE ADVANCE GUARD

#### THE ARRIVAL IN MOSCOW

ON SATURDAY afternoon, August 27th, 1921, seven days after the signing of the Riga agreement, the first contingent of the A.R.A. Russian Unit, headed by Philip H. Carroll, rolled into the Windau station of Moscow. The trip had been interesting but uneventful. At Sebes, the frontier station, the officials were courteously curious, and the expected signs of the machinery of terror, by which the Communists ruled, and about which so many hair-raising tales were told, were absent. The wayside stations revealed an occasional evidence of Soviet authority in the frail, pathetic persons of youthful Red soldiers, swathed in military overcoats, several sizes too large, bearing rifles seemingly much too heavy for their strength, and wearing the famous peaked woolen helmet, which despite its red star, looked for all the world like a nightcap ineffectually disguised. The only signs along the way to suggest the famine were the crawling freight trains of gaunt refugees, ill-clad, hungry, and sick, crammed together like animals. These were not Russians in flight from the famine, but Poles, Lithuanians, Letts, Estonians, returning after five years of forced exile, to the desolate plots of ground where their homes stood before they were erased by the Grand Duke Nicholas in his great retreat.

Arriving in Moscow, the Americans discovered that though not unexpected, their coming had not been prepared for. Representatives of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs and of the Famine Relief Committee of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee were at the station and immediately gave the Americans a significant object lesson. They observed that there were seven in the A.R.A. party—an unfortunately large

number, since their government (at the moment ruling over some 120,000,000 souls) had planned for only three, and could not on short notice provide sleeping quarters for more. Carroll offered to spend another night in the car in the railroad yards, but then intimated that he would like to settle on quarters the following day and get in contact with the officials with whom he had to deal. Volodin, the representative of the Foreign Office, hastily pointed out that it was already late in the afternoon and nothing could be done that day. The following day being Sunday, a day of rest, though not of worship for the Communists, no business could be done. The Bolsheviks, it seemed, though they had adopted many western ideas in breaking Russian traditions, still clung to the oriental conception of time. The Americans, therefore, spent Sunday looking about the city, so variously interesting.

In every respect Moscow was strikingly unlike Riga and the Central European cities, where the members of Carroll's party had spent many months as members of the A.R.A. Missions. The people were listless, anaemic, heavily depressed; they were laboriously active only in the struggle for food. Tram-cars ran with casual regularity, along streets flanked by shops with boarded windows like bandaged eyes, by dwellings in various states of dilapidation, ranging from broken windows stuffed with sacking to complete demolition. The city was shabby, battered, bruised, just beginning to steady itself after its riotous, revolutionary debauch. In the bazaars pallid and shabby people bartered remnants from happier days for food. At the stations there was busy traffic on the trains to and from nearby country villages whither workmen and speculators, and such others as could afford to, traveled with their baskets and bags to buy the authorized two poods (seventy-five pounds) of grain from the peasants. Although the New Economic Policy had been adopted, traders did not yet trust the edict sufficiently to display wares in any quantity. Few shops were open and these scantily stocked. Starvation, such as was later encountered along the Volga and the Ukraine, did not appear on the surface in Moscow. There was food to be had at prices not much above the American level, but far beyond the means of most of those to whom it was offered.



The majority of persons met, therefore, were obviously undernourished, hungry, weary, and disheartened.

Like conditions, the A.R.A. later found, prevailed in all large towns not in the famine regions—there conditions were much worse—with disease everywhere claiming a disproportionate number of victims among the children.

The general plan of the campaign was this:

FIRST, to make contacts with the central authorities in Moscow, to establish headquarters and the groundwork of organization and to prepare to receive food stocks already en route.

SECOND, to establish feeding points for famine refugees and waifs in Moscow and Petrograd, where food would be first available.

THIRD, to investigate the Volga famine regions, to make contacts with provincial officials, to set up district organizations, and to establish feeding points in the district centers.

FOURTH, to expand the organization to villages and less accessible points and spread the feeding operations as rapidly as the arrival of supplies permitted.

FIFTH, to carry on further investigations in regions reported by Soviet officials as needing help and to commence operations in these new regions as rapidly as possible.

On Monday Carroll met L. B. Kamenev, chairman of the Moscow Soviet and the official through whom the A.R.A. was to maintain contact with the Central Government. Litvinov, of the Foreign Office, who had represented Russia at the Riga negotiations, was also present.

The Americans found Kamenev seemingly lacking in all the external characteristics with which western Europeans and Americans had endowed all Bolsheviki. There were Communists who looked the part, as conceived by the caricaturists, but Kamenev was not one of them. A stocky man of medium height with a fine head, a well-trimmed beard, and keen eyes behind pince-nez, he gave an impression of the well-fed solidity of a bourgeois intellectual. An urbane, affable courtesy, combined with a willingness to make decisions quickly and act on them, made him highly satisfactory to those who had things to do quickly. There was nothing picturesque about him: he was merely a very courteous, very able, very hard-

working official with a sense of proportion. Most real Communists, the A.R.A. discovered later, were hard-working, many were able, some courteous, but relatively few had this sense of proportion which is by no means a virtue in a revolutionary leader, but is essential to a successful administrator. Lacking the reputation and personality of Lenin, the brilliance of the erratic Trotsky, the mystery of Stalin, and the appalling verbosity of Zinoviev, Kamenev made poor copy for journalists who were required to find something bizarre or sinister in all Communist leaders, and has, therefore, been little known to the world. It was fortunate, however, for the new Russia that the Communist machinery of government, with its tendency to erratic performance, contained this reliable balance wheel. It was fortunate for the A.R.A. that this particular man was selected by the Soviet government to act for it in relief matters, for from this first meeting in August, 1921, to the last in July, 1923, Kamenev was the friend at the Communist court to whom the leaders of the A.R.A. could turn when all else failed, assured of a fair hearing and friendly coöperation.

At the first meeting both Kamenev and Litvinov admitted frankly that the A.R.A. had moved faster than they had expected, and, therefore adequate preparations had not been made. Kamenev confessed that he had not had time even to study the clauses of the Riga Agreement. Both officials, however, expressed their pleasure that the A.R.A. was already on the ground and assured Carroll of their desire to give every assistance. Volodin, a Russian of Jewish extraction who had been deported from America and hence felt a greater admiration for the American secret service than for Americans generally, set out with the Americans to find living quarters and offices. One of the first buildings inspected was number 30 Spiridonovka, a large stone residence of 30 rooms, which had been the home of a wealthy Armenian before the revolution. This building which was large enough for both offices and living quarters for a time at least, was more satisfactory than others inspected and was chosen. It was not by any means in condition for occupancy, but Volodin promised that it would soon be made so.

The condition of this building was representative of a great number of the larger residences of Moscow that had been nationalized and used by the government for either offices, or housing purposes. 30 Spiridonovka had contained schools; it had also housed an undetermined number of families occupying one or two rooms each. The central heating plant, since no one was responsible for it, had long since ceased to function and the occupants of the house had kept warm by setting up stoves in their rooms, making holes in the walls, where necessary, for stove-pipes. The water system was also useless and a large area of the cellar was under two feet of water. The rooms were indescribably filthy, particularly the bathrooms, which had been used for every purpose but bathing. An inspection of the cellar revealed not only the wreck of the heating plant, but that some of the occupants of the house were following agricultural pursuits, either to piece out their own food supply or as a business venture. Here was an indiscriminate collection of pigs, poultry and rabbits, whose living conditions like those of their owners left much to be desired.

The matter of putting the quarters and the warehouse, chosen the following day at the Boinia railway yards, into condition gave the Americans further insight into the situation in Russia at the time. 30 Spiridonovka was cleared of sufficient of its occupants to permit the taking over by the Americans in a reasonably short time. The matter of furnishing the house was also easily solved and in an interesting way. Volodin took one of the A.R.A. to a warehouse, in which were stored quantities of furniture, carpets, rugs, dishes, silverware, pictures, mirrors, and the like, confiscated by the government from the homes of affluent bourgeoisie. Evidently the necessity of furnishing other quarters had somewhat reduced the supply, but there were plenty of articles except beds, from which Volodin with a sweeping, generous gesture urged the A.R.A. to make its selection.

At the warehouse things moved more slowly, due to the fact that of the three hundred men who were to clean it, forty-seven reported, of whom seven appeared to take a helpful interest in the proceedings.



The greater part of one night was required for moving to 30 Spiridonovka the equipment and food supplies brought from Riga. The trucks, which the government offered to assist in the moving, due to one complication or another, failed to show up until the job had been practically completed. The failure of the trucks was in a certain measure offset by the assistance given by workmen in the railroad yards, who helped to unload the A.R.A. camionette and motor car. For this service they refused to accept pay, since the Americans had come to help Russia in her time of need. By three o'clock in the morning, thanks to the efficient service of the camionette, the Americans were installed, though far from settled, in the building which was to serve as the headquarters of the A.R.A. for two years. The building was still filthy, it lacked water, and it possessed no facilities for cooking. But the mere fact that the A.R.A. had established headquarters meant progress, for it was now possible to begin the building of the organization required for the task ahead.<sup>1</sup>

#### COÖPERATIVE ENTERPRISE IN A COMMUNIST STATE

While the offices, living quarters and warehouses were still being cleaned and arranged, the Americans took the preliminary steps in the creation of a local Russian staff and organization. This proved to be another enlightening experience and taught the Americans a great deal about the business of coöperating in public service in a socialist state which happens to be under a rigorous dictatorship.

The broad foundation upon which the A.R.A. had successfully developed its relief campaigns in other parts of Europe was to help the people of these countries, physically and morally devastated by war, to help themselves. National relief organizations were built up with provincial, city, and township branches which provided the channels through which American supplies, supplemented by what could be furnished locally, reached those in need. Since, however, it was essential that the fires of political, racial, and religious hatred that had flamed as a result of war and subsequent social and eco-

<sup>1</sup> P. H. Carroll, "A.R.A. Headquarters Established in Moscow," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XVIII, 12-15.

conomic confusion, should receive no more fuel, the absolute, final control of all supplies and their disposition remained ever in the hands of the American representatives. In no country had this object been achieved without hard work, tact, persistence, and disillusionment. But in time success came and there grew up in each country a local organization with a splendid esprit, independent of, but supported by, the national and local governments, and composed of devoted men and women enjoying the confidence of all classes. For the most part the positions of chief responsibility were held by persons without political entanglements. They were selected for their standing in the community, for their experience with social work, as doctors, teachers, or civil servants. They were responsible, therefore, not to any political party or class, or group, but to the needy, whom they served, and to the A.R.A. whose policy they believed in and whose regulations they willingly enforced.

After a few months experience in Russia, the A.R.A. Russian Unit would have regarded the suggestion that the precedent of western Europe be followed in Russia as fantastic, but in these early days they were innocently unaware of the devious workings of government under the proletarian dictatorship. They proceeded, therefore, with confident directness to build the framework of what was to be called the Russian American Children's Relief Committee, which, translated into Russian, was represented by the letters R.A.K.P.D. They immediately encountered two imposing obstacles. The first was the attitude of the Soviet Government, which in itself was sufficient to prevent the construction of a national committee like that erected in Poland under the name of the P.A.K.P.D. The second was the attitude of those qualified to hold the positions of greatest responsibility in the proposed Committee.

An interview with Kamenev left no doubt as to the Government's position. While recognizing the right of the A.R.A. under the Riga Agreement to form independent committees, he flatly refused to agree that any except an appointee of his government should sit with the representatives of the A.R.A. on the central controlling committee of the R.A.K.P.D. The

Soviets would deal with or through no unofficial Russians, but exclusively and directly with the A.R.A. This meant that there could be no counterpart of the Polish or Austrian organizations under the Communist régime. But the Americans did not despair. It was still possible that some adaptation of the original scheme might be worked out, and they began to discuss the project with several well-known professors in the University. There was enlightenment in these interviews.

Every man interviewed, politely but firmly, declined to serve on the R.A.K.P.D. central committee. Many did not have the time, others lacked the strength, and others had other reasons, none of which, however, was in the circumstances convincing. Soon it was revealed that these men, all of whom were well known in their fields in Russia and many of whom had European reputations, did not dare to have anything to do with this American plan. The terror, that relentless steam-roller which the Communists had driven up and down, back and forth, across Russia, bending down or crushing into conformity the resisting spirit of all who did not acquiesce in the dictatorship, had destroyed not only the impulse to political opposition, but all impulse to public service of any sort which spies and informers might twist into "evidence" of secret opposition to the ruling class. Moscow, moreover, had just been given a convincing lesson in the hazards of non-partisan relief activity.

On July 21, a month before the Riga Agreement was signed, the press announced the formation in Moscow of an All Russian Relief Committee. This announcement was significant, for, while the initiative came from the government and Kamenev held the chairmanship, the membership included not only representatives of the Government, but some who held different opinions, among whom were Dr. Kishkin, a well-known Moscow physician, who had been the head of the cabinet for a few days after the flight of Kerensky; Professor Prokopovitch of Moscow University, V. Korolenko, the writer, and Alexandra Tolstoy, the daughter of the man who had fought so valiantly against the indifference of the Czarist government during former famines. It was an encouraging sign, and those who had been insisting without much evidence that



coöperation with the Soviets for relief on a non-partisan basis was wholly feasible, pointed to this news as proof of their contentions. On the day when the first A.R.A. men reached Moscow the members of the All Russian Relief Committee were summoned to meet Kamenev, the Chairman. The members assembled, but the chairman did not appear. Instead, there came a detachment from the Cheka, whose leader announced that the committee was dissolved and the members were under arrest. There followed the customary questioning of the prisoners, some of whom were released after a few hours and some left in prison, charged with counter-revolutionary activity, a charge as the A.R.A. soon learned, that covered a multitude of crimes. So ended a promising, but in the circumstances, doubtless impossible scheme.<sup>2</sup> It is impossible to say whether there was counter-revolutionary activity in the committee, as the Communists charged and the members denied, but the occurrence explains why the A.R.A. met only excuses and evasions when it tried to enlist the service of Moscow intellectuals in the R.A.K.P.D.

In spite of these setbacks an R.A.K.P.D., of a kind, did come into being to lead an ineffectual, troubled life for a few months. It was a failure, and in Moscow soon died a natural and painless death. In the few districts where it was established, the end came only after a struggle, for there the Communists, who had made the most of their opportunities while the Americans were engulfed in the details of making surveys and establishing feeding points, found it a convenient vehicle for exercising control or undue influence on the feeding policy.

#### THE FIRST A.R.A. SHIP IN A RUSSIAN PORT

Several days before the first shipload of A.R.A. supplies, consigned to Petrograd, had reached that port, news dispatches from European sources told of a desperate mob of half-starved workmen, which had boarded the ship and car-

<sup>2</sup> Emma Goldman, who was in Russia at the time, states that the formation of this All Russian Committee was merely a maneuver to impress the western bourgeoisie, carried out by the Communists, who had no intention of allowing the Committee to function. *My Further Disillusionment in Russia*, 178, New York, 1924.

ried off all its cargo. The events actually attending the discharging of the first steamer, though by no means as spectacular as this report, were of interest.<sup>3</sup> A few days after the Riga Agreement was signed, Noyes and Lowrie from the A.R.A. Baltic Mission, followed a day or so later by Bowden of the Hungarian mission, went to Petrograd via Reval to receive the first ship and prepare to feed refugee children from the famine zones. The Petrograd Soviet officials received the Americans with every courtesy and showed an encouraging eagerness to assist in every way. They turned over a warehouse, office space, and buildings for kitchens and mobilized everything that remained of the technical and labor forces of the port. The S.S. *Phoenix* reached Petrograd late on September 1st with 700 tons of balanced rations. The force of stevedores promised by the Labor Department was on hand reasonably early on the next morning, discharging began at once, and proceeded with excellent result until the commodities in sack containers were reached. Then the stevedores began to apply the hooks, which they had been using in handling the wooden containers, with unusual and unnecessary vigor. The sacks became badly torn. Flour, rice, and sugar oozed out to the floor of the warehouse, whence it rapidly disappeared into the pockets of the workers. Noyes, who was superintending the discharging, immediately forbade the use of hooks on this part of the cargo. The stevedores were displeased; they knocked off work; held a meeting; and declared a strike. Appeal by Noyes to the Soviet official in charge was in vain, and operations were finally resumed after the stevedores promised to use the hooks more discreetly. This promise they carried out, and all went well until it came time for the first shift to be relieved.

Openly and deliberately, in the face of the guards who were standing about to prevent pilferage, the workmen proceeded systematically to fill all available parts of their clothing—their hats, their pockets, the tied legs of their trousers—with flour, sugar, and tins of preserved milk. As they left the dock

<sup>3</sup> Another press dispatch at this time said that a trainload of A.R.A. supplies had been seized by the Red Army at the Russian frontier town of Jamburg. No A.R.A. supplies had been sent over this route.

they were searched by the guards. The search, however, consisted of casually slapping each workman on the pocket, and though he bulged in every direction and in violation of all principles of anatomy, though he could scarcely waddle along with his load, he was passed without question. To put an end to this business, Lowrie persuaded a reluctant guard to arrest an unnaturally rotund worker. There was a roar of protest from the companions of the prisoner. They swarmed about and protested. "Why arrest him? We are all equally guilty; look here and here." They pointed to their own overstuffed persons. Then there was another meeting which clamorously voted that unless the prisoner were released no one would report for further work on the ship. An appeal to the Soviet official in charge brought no results. He said he was quite helpless; that all the workmen were hungry and so were the guards, and that as a matter of fact, the A.R.A. was lucky in having something which the workmen could pilfer, otherwise it might take weeks instead of days to unload the ship. To prove his point he indicated another ship nearby which had been eight days loading 950 tons, because there was nothing to steal. In spite of this discouraging beginning, the discipline improved and the ship was unloaded in excellent time. The losses from pilferage, due perhaps to the limited capacity of the workmen's clothing, were after all unimportant in relation to the cargo. By the time the second ship reached Petrograd still greater discipline had been established, and there were no more incidents of this kind.

This episode is significant, not as an indication of the dishonesty of the Petrograd stevedores, but of the practice of taking one's pay through pilferage or petty graft, a practice so general in all forms of employment at the time, that it could not be described as dishonest without indicting the whole population of the city. The factory worker, if lucky enough to find work, managed to live by taking articles manufactured in his shop and selling them surreptitiously in the market. Petty government officials increased their inadequate salaries by accepting tips and gifts of any description as a *quid pro quo* for service rendered. The fortunate ones in charge of warehouses and supply depots took care of themselves and their



families by appropriating the supplies (if any), they were employed to protect. Even the personnel of hospitals and children's institutions were driven by hunger to use for themselves the patients' food, and when even this was inadequate, as frequently was the case, they lived by selling such parts of the equipment as could be carried off. Graft was, of course, not a new phenomenon in Russia, but, from a profitable side line of the Czarist bureaucrats, it had become under Communism almost the only remunerative activity. This system, like an insidious poison, corrupted the healthy cells of the nation, paralyzing its effort. It required much time and a good deal of trouble for the A.R.A. to establish the fact that it would employ a less picturesque method of paying its employees, but once that fact was established, the problem of pilferage sank to negligible proportions, and the fact that the A.R.A. paid regularly, but discouraged dishonesty became for many Russians an incentive to join its forces.

### THE FIRST KITCHENS

Relief, which began in Petrograd with the opening of the first kitchen on September 7, six days after the arrival of the *Phoenix*, had to meet a situation unlike that in other parts of Russia.<sup>4</sup> In Moscow, the problem was not famine, as in the Volga villages, but rather undernourishment, so acute, however, that it amounted practically to starvation, among children whose parents, because of the economic disintegration of the city, were unemployed or earning too little to secure enough food to keep their children in strength, or even alive. There was, too, the additional problem of waifs and orphans from the streets, and refugees from the famine villages, who, because of their great number, the local government was unable to feed.

In the three years of the revolution between 1917 and 1920 Petrograd lost the population which it had taken fifty years to gain. The loss of this million six hundred thousand persons made Petrograd the one large city of Russia with sufficient

<sup>4</sup>C. G. Bowden, "Arrival of the First American Unit in Petrograd," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XVIII, 7-11.

lodgings to house its population.<sup>5</sup> Some of the loss in population was due to the departure of persons who could no longer find employment there, for in spite of the fact that the individual workman produced in 1922 but slightly more than half of what he produced in 1912, there was such a decrease in trade and industry that the number of persons employed had dropped 57 per cent. Part of the loss was due, also, to the transfer of the national government to Moscow, and to a less degree, to the flight of foreigners, of whom Petrograd formerly had many. A more important factor was the death rate which rose from 23 per thousand in 1917 to 72 per thousand in 1919.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately the death rate was particularly high among the most productive class of the population, the men of young and middle-age. This left the city with abnormally large numbers of the dependent classes. There were in 1922, for example, 65,000 widows. There were three times as many women as men, between 20 and 30 years of age, and the general ratio had dropped from 115 men per 100 women to 72 men. Petrograd had not been swept by famine, but in the years of the revolution which preceded the famine, it had suffered to a degree without parallel among modern cities.<sup>7</sup>

While workmen were cleaning and repairing the premises for the kitchens and the first truck loads of food were being delivered to city hospitals, as destitute as their patients, Bowden inaugurated a great campaign for the examination of the entire child population. He mobilized 75 doctors and 150 nurses who gave medical examinations in all the quarters of the city. They used a system of measurement devised by Professor Dr. Clemens von Pirquet, the eminent pediatrician of Vienna University, who was an invaluable collaborator in the A.R.A. work in Austria. The Pirquet system was used in all A.R.A. missions in western Europe and in Russia,

<sup>5</sup> In 1915 Petrograd had about 275,000 lodgings, housing 2,400,000 people, an average of nearly 9 persons per lodging. It is estimated that in 1922, 40,000 of these apartments had been destroyed, leaving 235,000, housing 800,000 inhabitants, or less than 4 per lodging. It is estimated that over 5,000 buildings, chiefly wooden structures, had been demolished and used for fuel.

<sup>6</sup> The highest death rate in Germany was in 1918, when the figure was 24 per thousand.

<sup>7</sup> S. M. Keeny, "The Effect of the War and Famine on Petrograd," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXV, 8-26.

wherever possible.<sup>8</sup> Of the total of 160,000 children in Petrograd between the ages of three and fifteen, all but 10,000 presented themselves as candidates for the A.R.A. kitchens. The 150,000 were classified roughly into three groups: first, those seriously undernourished; second, the undernourished; and third, the normal. Children in the first group were accepted at kitchens as fast as they were opened, and periodically thereafter, other examinations were held to determine what proportion of those attending the kitchens had progressed far enough along the road to normal status to permit replacing them with others who had perforce been excluded. The story of the feeding operations in this city was much less picturesque than in other places. There were abundant facilities for the equipment and maintenance of kitchens; transportation offered no serious problem; the Soviet officials gave coöperation; and in spite of the economic conditions there were usually sufficient funds in the hands of the officials to pay their part of the necessary expenses, i.e. rent, labor, et cetera.

Four days after the Petrograd youngsters had their first taste of A.R.A. food, the Moscow District opened its first and largest child feeding station in the Hermitage, which before the revolution was a famous restaurant where wealthy Muscovites dined late and luxuriously, overeating and overdrinking to the accompaniment of gypsy music in accordance with the best traditions of that time. The Moscow District child-feeding organization suffered at first from the fact that it could find no one to take responsibility even in trivial matters, except Kamenev, who was busy with his own affairs and more interested in the general organization of the A.R.A. than in the special local work. The liaison representatives whom he appointed at first were of little use and one of them succeeded in bringing the whole operation to a complete impasse. This occurrence resulted in the appointment of a woman of ability and understanding who gave intelligent,

<sup>8</sup> The Pirquet system is described in detail in *An Outline of the Pirquet System of Nutrition*, by Dr. Clemens Pirquet, 96, Philadelphia, 1922. Also "Dr. Clemens Pirquet, founder of the Nem and Pelidisi systems, Explains Their Significance in Relation to institutional and school feeding," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XVIII, 33-38.



effective coöperation. As in Petrograd, the problem here was aid to the most seriously undernourished, who constituted about 40 per cent of the children examined, and of special help to the institutions overwhelmed by the flood of refugees, which grew steadily with the arrival of every train from the east.

### IN TOUCH WITH FAMINE

The commencement of feeding in Moscow and Petrograd absorbed the energies of only a few of the Russian Unit, whose numbers began to be augmented by new arrivals from Riga. Five days after the first Americans reached Moscow, an investigation party was ready to start for the Volga region where the real famine relief work was to be concentrated. But being ready to start was a good deal less than half the battle. Trains in these days departed according to the whim of the station master, the engineer, or some other official, or according to the exigencies of the moment—never according to schedule. The investigation party, accompanied by a representative of the Central Government, arrived at the station early in the day and spent ten harassing hours getting a flat car for the Ford camionette and having it and the car in which the party was to ride attached to the train for Kazan. The departure of the train was then held up because of the non-appearance of a chauffeur whom the government had promised to furnish. The reason for this delay, it was learned later, was that the chauffeur must have other qualifications than a mastery of the technique of a Ford. He must be a member of the Cheka and, to be useful in that capacity, he must also understand English. Eventually the accomplished chauffeur turned up, but events proved that his abilities were linguistic rather than mechanical.

Eventually the train left Moscow and reached Kazan, the capital of the Tartar Soviet Republic, on the 3rd of September. After three days of investigation there, the party went to Simbirsk by rail, an arduous trip of four days, although the cities are only about one hundred and fifty miles apart. A few more days of inspection in Simbirsk, and then on to Samara by boat, where one of the men remained to establish the A.R.A.

organization, while the others returned to Moscow. The reports which they had wired to Moscow emphasized particularly the need of speed in organization, not only in the Volga cities, but in the villages where American help was even more necessary.<sup>9</sup> Immediately the reports reached Moscow, other Americans, conveying a trainload of balanced rations, left for each of the Volga districts.

In each gubernia<sup>10</sup> the local government was attempting to feed some of the starving, but its efforts were confined almost entirely to the principal cities. The need was less acute than in the villages, but for practical as well as political reasons the officials were obliged to devote their pitifully insufficient resources to city feeding. It would obviously have been impossible to spend their resources on the peasants, to the exclusion of the workers who live in the city and give the government its principal support. Moreover, refugees were flocking to the cities and themselves constituted a problem beyond the resources of local officials. Relief in the shape of seed distribution was carried out with good results in the accessible villages, but in remote sections the seed did not arrive until local supplies were exhausted and the planting season about over, so that much of this grain was consumed.

<sup>9</sup> "October 1st Samara Government will be entirely out of grain. . . . Four cantons, Stavropol, Samara, Nicolaëff, and Burguruslan, starving with 350,000 children affected. Remainder district approaching similar condition." From a telegram from John P. Gregg at Samara, 22 September, 1921. "Of the entire number of 82,792 children in the city of Kazan, 10,964 are cared for in public institutions by the government and 18,723 receive one meal a day from the government. This leaves at present 53,105 children in the city who receive only what food they get at home. Also it has been announced by the government that from October 1 it is probable that those children now receiving one meal will not get anything other than what they receive in their homes. This, together with the fact that the government has cut off from September 1 the *paiok* or food allowance of all government employees, shows that they fully realize the gravity of the situation and the necessity for concentrating their resources on the country districts, where at present conditions are much worse than in the City of Kazan." From a report from Will Shafroth at Kazan, September, 1921.

<sup>10</sup> Imperial Russia was divided for administrative purposes into gubernias or governments. Each gubernia contained a number of *uyezds* or counties, which were further subdivided into *volosts* or townships containing several villages or communes. The Soviet government retained these geographical divisions, but changed many boundaries and many names. The old Kazan gubernia became, for example, the Autonomous Tartar Soviet Republic, presumably out of deference to the principles of self-determination, but it remained as much under the thumb of Moscow as did the Simbirsk Gubernia, its neighbor to the southwest, which retained its old name.

The disintegration of urban life, noted in the case of Petrograd, occurred also in the provincial cities of the famine regions, though here the change was less striking, since they had never attained the magnificence of Petrograd and were at best little more than overgrown towns. Industry, trade, and commerce sickened and died, as everywhere else, until employment in the bureaucracy, or illegal speculation, were the only means by which to keep body and soul together.<sup>11</sup> Inevitably there was a sharp decrease in urban population.<sup>12</sup> In spite of this, there was an acute housing shortage. Government bureaus, which sprang up like mushrooms after a rain, overflowed from the public buildings into the most commodious residences. Children's homes, schools, and Communist clubs took over other residences. Under the policy of nationalization, funds were scarce, no repairs were made, and presently the quarters occupied as offices and residences became uninhabitable. Since it was cheaper to dispossess the occupants of another building than to repair the old, the officials then transferred their activities to another house, which in time suffered the same fate. In Samara the conscripts of the Red Army conceived the idea that as soon as their barracks became uninhabitable they would be demobilized and sent home. They, thereupon, systematically and thoroughly wrecked every structure in which they were successively quartered. During the bleak days of Military Communism, fuel was as scarce as food and half frozen people searched for unoccupied or unguarded buildings from which to get wood. Floors, doors, even roof-beams disappeared like

<sup>11</sup> The following figures give an indication of the decline in industry in provincial cities. In the area of the Tartar Republic the number of large and small industrial plants was reduced from 4,020 pre-war to 2,013 in 1920. Large industrial plants were reduced from 406 to 140. The leather industry, one of the most important, decreased its output from 2,000,000 black cattle hides to 288,500. In another large industry the annual output of 1,000,055 poods of candles and soap fell in 1920 to 122,000 poods. In Simbirsk the industrial plants in operation were reduced by 44 per cent. It should be noted that even in cases of plants listed as functioning, operations were spasmodic and on a greatly reduced scale. J. Rives Childs, *General Report on A.R.A. Kazan District*.

<sup>12</sup> The following decreases in population of certain Volga cities took place between 1913 and 1920: Kazan—195,000 to 146,000; Saratov—235,000 to 188,000; Tzaritzin—100,000 to 81,000; Astrakhan—163,000 to 121,000. Samara appears to have been an exception, the population increasing from 150,000 to 175,000.



magic, and soon the houses collapsed, completely wrecked. Other houses became uninhabitable because of the destructive tactics of the occupants who felt no responsibility since the buildings belonged to everybody and to nobody in particular. The cisterns, which in Kazan took the place of a sewerage system, were left without attention until they overflowed into cellars, menacing the health of the entire city. Garbage, refuse, and excrement were thrown indiscriminately into the street or into the courtyards where they remained snowcovered until the spring sun revealed to nose and eye the poisonous accumulation. The water systems of the cities went unrepaired until even hospitals were without running water. Such water as was available came from polluted wells and streams.

The most striking examples of the horrors incident to the famine and social decay, the A.R.A. men found in the hospitals, the children's homes—particularly the emergency institutions known as collectors—and at the railway stations. Emaciation, deformity from hunger, filth, and disease were, of course, everywhere, but more significant of the state of affairs was the shortage of materials, revealed in these brief notes made by an American on an inspection of government institutions.

*"Home No. 1.*—There are 81 children, of whom 20 have had typhus and of whom 10 are now ill with it. There are 21 beds, 20 blankets, no bed linen or body linen, no warm clothing, no footwear, and some of the children, although they had been a month in the institution, were literally half-naked.

*"Hospital.*—100 adults sick, and 67 children. For the 167 there are 100 beds, 70 blankets (if rags may be called blankets) and there is no linen.

*"Evacuation Home.*—290 children from 3 to 14 (years of age). This evacuation home, which is typical of those in the Tartar Republic, is filled with children picked up from the streets. 25 is the average number received daily. Owing to the lack of space in the children's homes in Chistopol, some have to remain in this home for a month, in which accommodation is very elementary. There are no blankets, no linen, and no warm clothing. The children are in a half-naked condition.

*"Children's Hospital.*—184 children from 1 to 14. About 25 per cent of the cases are due to hunger, the others to disease, including tuberculosis and typhus. There are no blankets, no linen, no footwear, no warm clothing, no medicines, and the doctor has since my last visit died from typhus. The hospital is fairly clean.

*"Distributing Home.*—There are 53 children of whom 36 are ill with typhus. There are no beds, no blankets, no linen, no laundry, and no clothing and the home is very unclean."<sup>13</sup>

In the case of the hospitals, food for patients requiring a special diet was out of the question, since there was not enough of any description to keep the patients alive. Many, because they were too weak to leave, remained in the institutions and ran the double risk of dying from disease or, if they escaped that, from starvation. There were no medicines, no soap, no fuel, no water, but few worn instruments—even beds were lacking. Hunger made attendants apathetic. That these institutions were able to carry on at all was due primarily to the heroism of the doctors, who, hungry, overworked, and unremunerated, fought bravely to save others until they themselves succumbed.

The emergency children's institutions or collectors offered an even more ghastly picture than the hospitals. Usually they were housed in buildings unfit and inadequate. Confusion and disorganization reigned under the mismanagement of persons listless with hunger. The children, their bodies deformed by starvation, covered with the vermin-infested rags, huddled together on the floor like blind kittens, the sick, the starving, and the dead indiscriminately. The buildings invariably lacked even the crudest sanitary equipment, and the rooms in which these helpless creatures were confined gave off the stench of a long neglected latrine. To such places came boys and girls whose parents had died or had deserted them, ghastly caricatures of childhood, with faces emaciated and yellow, or swollen and blue, with eyes burning with the terrible sparkle of hunger, with angular shoulders and arms like flails.

Rivalling the collectors in horrors were the railway stations of the cities and junction points, where the peasants who had

<sup>13</sup> From an inspection report by J. Rives Childs, in the Tartar Republic, December 9-23, 1921.

left their homes in panic became marooned. Here they waited for trains which never came, or for death which was inevitable.

"Imagine a compact mass of sordid rags, among which are visible here and there, lean, naked arms, faces already stamped with the seal of death. Above all one is conscious of a poisonous odor. It is impossible to pass. The waiting room, the corridor, every foot thickly covered with people, sprawling, seated, crouched in every imaginable position. If one looks closely he sees that these filthy rags are swarming with vermin. The typhus stricken grovel and shiver in their fever, their babies with them. Nursing babies have lost their voices and are no longer able to cry. Every day more than twenty dead are carried away, but it is not possible to remove all of them. Sometimes corpses remain among the living for more than five days.

"Once—only once—it was decided to clean the railway station. Old rags, remnants of foodstuffs, dirty bandages, fifteen wagons of every conceivable filth were hauled out.

"These inhabitants of the railway stations are refugees homeless, starving. It has proved to be impossible to clear them out, although *thirty-six decrees* ordering it have been issued. No registration is attempted. Whence they come and whither they are going, no one knows.

"A woman tries to sooth a small child lying in her lap. The child cries, asking for food. For some time the mother goes on rocking it in her arms. Then suddenly she strikes it. The child screams anew. This seems to drive the woman mad. She begins to beat it furiously, her face distorted with rage. She rains blows with her fist on its little face, on its head and at last she throws it upon the floor and kicks it with her foot. A murmur of horror arises around her. The child is lifted from the ground, curses are hurled at the mother, who, after her furious excitement has subsided, has again become herself, utterly indifferent to everything around her. Her eyes are fixed, but are apparently sightless.

"One attempt was made to establish a rest house for the refugees, but at the end of the week it became rather a death house. It was impossible to keep it in order and it was finally closed as a spreader of contagion. It is impossible to close the railway station. *There is no way to stop this great wave of starving peasants who come to the city to die.*" <sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> From an account written by a Russian observer in Simbirsk.



The Soviet authorities tried to stop the wave and were engulfed by it. More and more the refugees came, and fewer were the trains that the demoralized, overburdened railways could deliver to move these dazed people. The stream moving westward from the Trans-Volga, clogged into pools of human misery in the Volga cities, and similar pools formed at Cheliabinsk and Orenburg of those who vainly tried to reach the fabled plenty of Siberia and Turkestan. The situation was so far beyond the resources and abilities of the local officials that they seemed no more able to stem the vast tide of human misery than to stem the current of the Volga. On ruined towns and desolated villages across the bleak, dreary steppes had fallen the heavy pall of black misery, of inert despair. Into this atmosphere of fatalistic hopelessness came the representatives of that distant incredible land—America.

### THE DISTRICTS

The A.R.A. men who came to the Volga with the first consignments of food, dealt in all cases directly with the chief officials of the gubernias, and not through an intermediary representing the Moscow Central Government as was later the case. In general, they followed the same procedure in each of the four districts—Kazan, Simbirsk, Samara, and Saratov—where the first feeding points were established. Upon their arrival (there were at least two and usually three sent to organize each district) they called upon the chief official of the gubernia, explained what they had come for, how many children they were prepared to feed, how they proposed to accomplish this, and requested the assistance of the local government in providing the necessary buildings and equipment and in securing the services of local people who were qualified to do the administrative and clerical work required. In most cases the local officials knew nothing whatever about the Riga Agreement under which the A.R.A. was to work and they were, of course, quite unfamiliar with the system of organization and control. All these matters had to be carefully explained and it is pleasant to record that during these first days the local officials, practically without exception, gave their

full coöperation in assisting the A.R.A. to create its own organization, although this organization was independent and functioned on a non-partisan basis. There was an evident desire to show a friendly spirit. In Kazan, all requests made at the first meeting with the officials were complied with within an hour. In Simbirsk, the first food train arrived on a Sunday, and the laborers previously engaged refused to work on this day of rest, famine or no famine. As soon as the Communist leaders heard of this, they mobilized the party and unloaded the train in record time. In only one of the four gubernias did the question arise of dividing the territory for relief purposes between the A.R.A. and another organization. That was in Saratov, where the representative of the British Save the Children Fund arrived at about the time of the A.R.A. The British chose to work on the west side of the river, leaving the east side to the A.R.A. There was, at first, what appeared to be an attempt by some of the Government officials to play off the British against the Americans, but the most cordial relations between the two foreign organizations were very soon established and continued without interruption.

The selection of inspectors, administrators, and kitchen managers was a difficult, delicate matter. In addition to the ability to do the work, the Russians selected by the A.R.A. must possess the confidence of their communities, and be acceptable to the local Communists. In every other part of Europe it had been possible to find in any city of any size a number of persons experienced in administrative, welfare, or philanthropic work, who were immediately available. In Russia, however, as a result of the eruptions of war and revolution, the class from which volunteer workers would naturally have been drawn had entirely disappeared, and those who before the revolution had been identified with public service of this kind were dead, in exile, or thoroughly terrorized and themselves the neediest objects of charity. Even when persons whose training and abilities made them particularly qualified were found, it was very hard to persuade them to participate in the A.R.A. organization, for they knew from bitter experience the inevitable penalty of being associated

with anything not controlled by the Communist Party. Many applicants for less important positions explained that they could not undertake any work requiring physical labor on account of lack of strength. Others were willing to work for the A.R.A., if they could continue their employment in three or four offices or departments of the government. Eventually, the desire to resume useful employment with regular remuneration, which had not been possible during the years of the revolution, influenced those whose help had been solicited to serve on the A.R.A. staff.

At first there was little official interference with the A.R.A. District Supervisor's plan and procedure. In two of the districts an attempt was made to have the A.R.A. distribute its products through the Gubernia Food Departments and the coöperatives. In both cases the matter was dropped on the refusal of the A.R.A. to consent to this arrangement. In Simbirsk an official objection was made to the inclusion of priests on A.R.A. village committees for the reason that "according to the laws of our constitution, the said element (ecclesiastical) is harmful to the younger generation, and by the principles of the Soviet Government this element is deprived of all active or passive participation in our work." In Samara, likewise, there was a brief and ineffective attempt to deny the A.R.A. the right to organize local committees by interpreting Paragraph XII of the Riga Agreement as referring only to the right to select American personnel.

With no conception of the magnitude of the operation which the A.R.A. proposed to carry out, and constantly amazed and disturbed by the rushing tactics of the mad Americans, Communist officials did what they could to provide the A.R.A. with the scant minimum of material equipment. Warehouses in the gubernia capitals were easy to obtain, since there was neither grain nor goods of local production to fill them. Living quarters and offices presented greater difficulties because of the housing shortage. But here again, in practically every district, buildings were turned over to the A.R.A. which permitted comfortable living conditions and adequate office space, which was increased to keep pace with the expansion of the program. But in spite of the best intentions on the part of



the officials, a tremendous amount of time and energy had to be expended on the simplest, relatively unimportant details. It took persistent nagging, expostulations, and search to get proper locks for store-rooms, scales or measures for the kitchens, paper and pens for keeping kitchen accounts, kettles, and fuel.

But these arduous days were enlightening. The Russians, for whom famine was a familiar catastrophe, naturally could not understand the nervous impetuosity of the young Americans who seemed to think that if things were not done at breakneck speed all would be lost, whereas the natives knew that there would be hungry to feed next week, the week after, and next year. The Americans, on their part, youthful, impatient, and deeply moved by the misery and helplessness about them, were appalled by the apathy and oriental fatalism with which the ghastly horrors of hospitals, stations, and streets were accepted. They found that the Russian "sichas," though like its French equivalent "tout de suite" much overrated, was the most frequently used word in their newly acquired vocabulary.

These temperamental differences were not fundamental obstructions and within a period of from two days to a week after American food arrived in the gubernia cities, kitchens were actually in operation and children being fed. The beginning of feeding signified more than that food had been received and issued to feeding stations. It meant that buildings had been cleaned, prepared, and somehow equipped; that children had been examined and those in the greatest need authorized to attend the kitchens; that bakeries had been taken over and made ready to bake bread for daily issue to the kitchens; that kitchen managers, cooks, and other helpers had been engaged and instructed in preparing and serving American food in accordance with prescribed menus which gave the children the greatest nutritive value with the greatest variety possible from the food available.

Among the first to receive American help were the institutions for waif and refugee children, whose condition has been described. Such conditions were the rule rather than the exception, and to make the American help effective it was

necessary to insist that cleanliness and order be established in the homes, and that the departments of the government responsible for them use every resource they had to repair the material equipment. In nearly every case, it should be said that the personnel, when promised regular and definite aid, did what they could to raise the standard of the institutions. The effect on institutional work throughout Russia will be treated in greater detail in another place, but it should be noted in passing that the raising of the morale of the institutional workers, as well as the improvement in the condition of their charges and the conduct of the institutions, was one of the most significant of the immediate effects of the A.R.A. activity.

### THE VILLAGES

The Americans immediately recognized the necessity of getting the villages organized and kitchens opened with the utmost speed. Feeding in the gubernia cities and not in the villages, as the Government perforce had to do, meant, simply that the starving, the hungry, the panic-stricken, and the lazy flocked to the cities in the hope of sharing the public feeding. Already the villages were becoming depopulated and unless the refugee stream could be stopped at the source, there would soon be no one left to make and harvest the next year's crop. The approach of winter was another reason for speed, for soon the rivers—an exceedingly important way of communication—would be frozen and the few, feeble railway lines would begin their unequal battle with snow.

While one American remained in the capital to build the central organization of the district, to open kitchens, receive incoming supplies, and arrange for reshipment, one or two other Americans in each district fared forth by boat, by rail, or behind tired horses, as thin and listless as their drivers, to select warehouses for sub-district supply bases, and organize committees and kitchens in towns and villages. The scenes which became an everyday occurrence in the lives of these Americans were much more harrowing than those of the gu-

bernia capitals, though these had seemed incredibly desperate in comparison with Moscow. In practically every gubernia metropolis it was still possible to buy foodstuffs in the markets, if one had the money. There was some activity about the railway stations, in the government offices, and on the streets. The cities were dying, but there were still signs of life. The aspect of a starving village, however, was quite different.

As one approached along the wavering track across the fields which served as a road and which, as it neared the settlement broadened like a stream, one needed no guide to be told of the degree of want that assailed the village. If any signs of life were visible, if a peasant boy in ragged sheepskin coat sauntered along the road, if a woman crossed it, the village was not yet *starving*. No matter if in the village street one saw neither horse nor dog; no matter if most of the thatch had been pulled down from the roofs of the cottages; no matter if the people one met looked more like skeletons than living, the village was not starving; it was only underfed. One knew a starving village by its utter desolation. Not a living soul could be seen in the street, which seemed to have given up its function and become merely a dividing line between rows of silent huts. Such starving villages were less frequently met these days, than later when the American corn was being distributed, but even at this time the deathly quiet villages were numerous enough. To find a quarter or even half of the houses closed and boarded up, attesting the flight of their occupants, was common. Already the deaths from starvation were so many, that village clerks no longer kept records, and it was found that such a family or such persons had died, only when lists were verified. Of those who remained alive, nearly all were subsisting on food substitutes, the components of which indicated the degree of their want. The more fortunate mixed grain with chaff or ground weeds and acorns. Others, having no grain, made nauseating, poisonous concoctions of weeds, treebark, and even clay and manure. Such domestic animals as remained were fast disappearing. They starved and died like their owners, or were killed for food. Men and women in desperation exhumed



dead animals, or killed and hungrily devoured cats and dogs when they could be found. The first to fall ill and die from the effects of such food were the children, and it was they, with their bloated bodies, their distorted limbs, and dazed expressions, to whom the Americans were bringing aid at this time.

Another aspect of the situation in the villages, no less frightful than the physical suffering, was the debasing and bestializing effect of the famine. The frequently heard complaint from the peasants, "we live like beasts," was amply justified. The ghastly struggle for existence destroyed any community spirit which had made easier the burdens of other disasters. In place of common effort came suspicion and hatred of one's neighbors, even the members of one's family, and crimes all the way from robbery to cold-blooded murder—in the more remote and less civilized communities, the final degradation of cannibalism.

The Americans, whose days and nights were spent with these suffering people, heard hair-raising stories illustrating the depths to which the villages had been brought by famine. In one village they told of a young lad with "hardly any hair on his lip," who cruelly murdered his neighbor while having a friendly talk at supper and afterward cut the body to pieces and concealed it under the floor of the hut. Having done this, he ate the remains of the murdered man's supper, took his store of grain, and went away. "We were at a loss," said the one who told this tale, "the more so, because the murderer was new to such things, because nothing of the kind had ever been heard of him before, and because his fellow-villagers could not expect it of him. When the thing happened, the villagers assembled. Some of them heaved sighs, some made the sign of the cross—and the next day everything was forgotten."

Other stories were told—of a husband and wife, who went together to the woods to get dry branches, which they piled in a heap and which in half an hour was all ablaze with the body of the murdered wife in the midst of the flames. "I had enough of her and there is the end of it," was the murderer's explanation. Those who retained their reason shook their

heads and confessed the growing indifference of public opinion to these crimes, carried out so deliberately and calmly. When asked if the communities did not struggle to prevent such things, the peasants shrugged their shoulders and looked at their feet. What was the use? After all, there was only one kind of struggle in the village, the terrible hourly struggle for something to eat.

To the peasant crazed with hunger, who had come to eating the flesh of animals dug up from the ground, the practice of eating human flesh was not such a long step. The extent to which such acts were carried out will never be known and it is doubtless true that many of the stories, common in the winter of 1921-22, were greatly exaggerated. On the other hand, such things unquestionably did take place, and they were discussed in the villages with a curious quietness. People spoke in the simplest manner about eating the foul impurities that passed for food and many would argue that the eating of human flesh could not be a crime, since the living soul had departed, and the bodies remained only as food for the worms in the ground.

The method of organizing feeding operations in the towns and villages outside the gubernia capital varied somewhat in each A.R.A. district, because of particular conditions in the different areas. In all cases, however, the first step was to secure from the gubernia officials such statistics as they had which would indicate the relative condition of the uyezds. On the basis of this information, the A.R.A. District Supervisors made a theoretical allocation, sending into the uyezds in the worst straits a larger number of rations in relation to the total population than to the uyezds reported as in less desperate need. The next step was to prepare the communities to receive the food, i.e., to have warehouses in which to store it, to have kitchens in which to prepare and serve it, and to have lists made of the most needy children to be the first fed. The Americans necessarily first organized the towns which, because of their geographical location, rail or water transportation facilities, and warehouses, would serve as regional bases for the surrounding villages.

The A.R.A. organizer set forth with a boat load or a train

load of food, sufficient to supply the region he was to organize for three weeks or a month. Upon arrival at the sub-district base, he went through much the same process as had been followed in the gubernia capitals, but always found his difficulties greater as he went farther from these centers. Warehouses were fewer, capable personnel harder to find, transportation more primitive, equipment seemingly non-existent, and the condition of the people worse.

The organization of the sub-district headquarters having been completed, the American then set out by whatever means of transportation he could find for the villages, which had been warned of his coming and asked to have ready the information on which he could make his allocations. The procedure and some of the hazards are illustrated by this time-schedule:

- " 1st Day    Midnight    Left Kazan on steamer loaded with supplies.
- " 2nd Day    2        a.m.    Ran aground. Captain of near-by tug refused to aid until threatened with arrest.
- 7        a.m.    Tug accepted a line from the steamer.
- 4        p.m.    Another tug accepted another line and the steamer was finally afloat.
- 11       p.m.    Arrived at Spassk Zaton. Interview with officials; organized committee. Arranged for horses for early morning. Arranged also for unloading part of the cargo of the steamer.
- " 3rd Day    6        a.m.    Began unloading, arranged for warehouses and transportation.
- 7        a.m.    Left Spassk Zaton. Drove 14 miles to Spassk.
- 9        a.m.    Meeting of 100 citizens of Spassk; explanation of the Riga Agreement and committees and details of feeding. Selection of the committee and meeting with its members. Inspection of warehouse and kitchen sites, children's homes, etc.
- 5        p.m.    Left Spassk to return to Spassk Zaton.



- 7 p.m. Arrived Spassk Zaton and went on board the steamer.
- 9 p.m. Arrived at Tetuishi. Interviewed officials and requested horses for 4 a.m. next morning.
- " 4th Day 5:30 a.m. Horses arrived. Departed for Buinsk.
- 9 a.m. Arrived Buinsk. Meeting and other activities as at Spassk.
- 11 a.m. Left Buinsk by wagon.
- 1:30 p.m. Arrived at steamer. Superintended unloading of supplies for Buinsk.
- 3 p.m. Unloading completed and started up river.
- 11:30 p.m. Arrived at Bogorodsk. Made futile attempt to locate barge with supplies which should have arrived from Kazan.
- " 5th Day 5 a.m. Located barge; made arrangements for unloading. Started for Kazan. Steamer delayed six hours en route.
- 5 p.m. Arrived Kazan.
- 7 p.m. Boarded another steamer with supplies, scheduled to sail immediately.
- " 6th Day 6 a.m. Sailed from Kazan.
- 8 a.m. Held up in the shallows while a barge aground was moved from the channel. This caused twenty-four hours' delay and the steamer ran aground as soon as it had got under way.
- " 8th Day 3:30 p.m. Again headed down river.
- 9 p.m. Arrived Bogorodsk. Made arrangements for towing barge to other landing for unloading supplies.
- " 9th Day 8:30 a.m. Meeting at Bogorodsk, committee organization, etc.
- 11 a.m. All arrangements completed, return to wharf to take expected steamer for Kazan.
- 7 p.m. Steamer eight hours behind expectation.
- " 10th Day 11 a.m. Returned to Kazan.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> From a report by Van Arsdale Turner, forwarded to the A.R.A. office in Moscow, October 19, 1921.

In the larger towns general meetings were not held, for in these places authority was jealously exercised by the Communist Party, and the committees were appointed in conference with the Government officials. The A.R.A. was usually able to secure the kind of committee-men it desired by insisting on certain indispensable qualifications, and this insistence prevented the appointment of persons whose sole virtue might be membership in the Communist Party.

The village committees as a rule consisted of a local teacher and two or three others, one of whom at least was a member of the village soviet, who had the confidence of the community. Frequently the village kitchens were established in the school-houses, the teacher serving as the kitchen manager. Since many of the schools had closed by this time, the arrangement served other purposes than to keep the children alive. It kept the teacher, who had received no pay for months, from starving, and the children, who came to the school-house to eat, remained to learn their letters.

The work in the villages was naturally arduous. The Americans carried their own food with them, but supplies were necessarily kept at a minimum. They traveled long distances over the most abominable roads in the world in primitive, springless Russian vehicles. They traveled in all weathers; in the beginning through the rain and mud of autumn, and later through snow with the temperature many degrees below zero. Nights they spent in peasant huts which offered nothing in the way of comfort and much in the way of diversion, in the small, crawling visitors of all shapes and species who were as eager for an American diet as the famished humans. There was the constant strain of working in the midst of suffering that seemed beyond human power to relieve, and the continuous harassment by little things, which though insignificant in themselves, threatened, because of ignorance, lassitude, inability, or material poverty to cause long delay or failure. Trainloads of food wasted precious days in alternately crawling and standing still on a run of only forty or fifty miles. Barges stuck on the shoals. Laborers engaged to unload the food refused to work until the government had paid them wages for a previous job. In remote villages the draft animals were possessed only

by the well-to-do peasants. Their children, because they were better fed, were at first not included in the feeding lists, and they, therefore, refused to use their animals to transport food from which they were to receive no benefit, unless they were paid for it.

A Russian A.R.A. inspector wrote of this attitude of the peasant:

"It is quite useless to try to convince them that they should help each other. There is no feeling of community spirit and there will be none for a long time to come. At the village meetings there is unanimous criticism of all government institutions, but this unanimity is conspicuous by its absence at all other times. If mutual help is mentioned the speaker is not allowed to proceed very far with his argument. If Christian charity is mentioned, the only reply is a dull silence interrupted by short remarks: 'Well, that is quite true, but we are so poor now; our horses are so feeble, and these people who have no horses gave us no help.' Much noisy and useless discussion follows with the inevitable result that no transportation is forthcoming. 'But why should I work free of charge? I get only two rations and Ivan, there, gets as many. Whose fault is it if he has no horse? Let him bring his own ration and I'll bring mine'."

Such obstacles delayed, but did not halt progress. Week by week the growing stream of food flowed from the bases to villages, hidden in the immensity of the Russian plain.

### THE KITCHENS

Much experience under diverse conditions in many countries had demonstrated the soundness of the A.R.A. policy of administering relief under a few broad principles rather than under detailed, restrictive regulations. These broad principles were: First, relief to those who needed it most without regard to race, religion, or politics. Second, food must be consumed by the beneficiary at the feeding point, where it was prepared under A.R.A. direction and served.<sup>16</sup> Third, strict account-

<sup>16</sup> This principle always met some objection from children's parents, but it was the only method by which the designated beneficiary could be assured of



ing for all food and funds in order to prevent waste or misuse.

It is not possible to describe any children's feeding point in Russia as typical. All the thousands of kitchens in great cities, provincial towns, and tiny villages applied the three principles stated above, but the method of application was determined by local conditions. Obviously the same methods could not be used in kitchens conducted on the former Emperor's estate at Tsarskoe Selo, in the once famous Hermitage Restaurant in Moscow, in an unused school house in Kazan, and in an abandoned peasant hut in a village of the steppes. It was one of the great merits of the A.R.A. relief technique that it was flexible enough to allow swift adaptation to such a variety of conditions.

In cities and large towns there were facilities and need for more elaborate methods. Periodic medical examinations determined the most needy. A card, like the bread cards of war time, entitled the child to whom it was issued to his daily meal for a specific period. Utensils for preparing and serving food were obtainable and central bakeries prepared the bread for a large number of kitchens. Motor trucks delivered the supplies from warehouses to kitchens and bakeries, and inspectors were continually busy visiting feeding points, checking accounts, following up "cases."

In the villages the methods were necessarily more informal. There were no physicians to give medical examinations, and they were not necessary, for in small communities public opinion accurately determined the most needy. Feeding cards were unobtainable and unnecessary, for the kitchen managers knew the village children. Food was prepared in such utensils as could be scraped together on great, plastered, Russian stoves. Children brought their own dishes of infinite variety—

receiving the full value of the ration. Sir Benjamin Robertson, the Indian famine expert who visited Russia early in 1922, commenting on this feature of the A.R.A. work, said that it had been the policy in India for twenty-five years to insist that children receiving food consume it at the feeding points. The A.R.A. adult soup kitchens were conducted on the same principle, but the corn distribution to adults was handled otherwise. Corn was issued whole or in the form of grits to the peasant families on the basis of a funt (about one pound) per day per capita. The nature of this ration, the scale on which it was distributed, and the vast area involved made this the most effective method of procedure.

pots, bowls, and basins of all sizes. They sat on rude benches at such primitive tables as the village could produce. There were no central bakeries, no motor trucks to make deliveries from accessible depots. Bread was cooked on the same stove as the rice, grits, cocoa, and other ingredients of the ration, and supplies were brought for a month or two months' period in peasant carts over laborious miles from distant railhead or steamer landing.

But in city and village kitchen there was one invariable sight. As the time for the daily meal drew near, groups of pallid, sad-eyed, silent children in indescribable rags gathered about the door of the kitchen. When the door opened, they filed silently past the attendant, who punched their cards or checked their names on the kitchen lists, past the serving bench, where each received his piece of bread and his portion of cocoa, rice, grits, or whatever constituted the ration for the day, and then to the tables where small heads bent tensely over clumsy dishes. Occasionally a mother came bringing in her arms a child too young and too weak to come alone. Eating was serious, preoccupying business to which there was no interruption until the last crumb and drop had disappeared. There were no demonstrations when officials or Americans on inspection visited the feeding points. In city kitchens and children's homes there might be a well coached chorus of "How are you's" and "Thank you's" in Russian, but in the villages the youngsters silently kept on with the engrossing business of eating. The sight of these ragged rows of thin bodies, desperately concentrated, was undoubtedly the greatest inspiration that the relief workers had. As one wrote, "To enter a village kitchen and watch these starving kids devouring our food made all the worries and the strain and the fights with the government and the discomforts of our everyday life seem trivial. A man back from the villages was sure to be a source of enthusiasm to those who had been battling along at headquarters, swamped with protocols and mandates and every other variety of paper. More than once, wearied by a discussion with the government representative more futile than usual, I would drop everything and wander out to the nearest A.R.A. kitchen just to look at the children and

get back my confidence that it was worth while trying to help them after all."<sup>17</sup>

### THE SECOND FAMINE FRONT: THE URALS AND THE CASPIAN

The program in force and projected in the central Volga regions and in Moscow and Petrograd by no means filled the abyss of Russia's need. From the regions to the east, from the slopes of the Urals, from the Kirghiz and Kalmuck steppes, from the shores of the Caspian, came moving, pathetic appeals for help. The reports of A.R.A. investigators confirmed the need, which was as urgent as along the Volga, and organizers followed to repeat the process already carried out along the great river. By the middle of November, 1921, the A.R.A. famine front had been pushed to the borders of Asia and beyond, and new districts were forming with headquarters at Ufa on the Russian feeder of the Trans-Siberian Railway, at Orenburg far down on the Tashkent line, and at Tzaritzin on the lower Volga, where the river turns left to flow for many miles by dull arid banks below sea level before pouring its yellow flood into the bitter waters of the Caspian.<sup>18</sup>

A few weeks later the establishment of sub-districts put American relief outposts on the Caspian Sea at Astrakhan and in the Kirghiz and Bashkir Republics, through the sub-bases organized at Uralsk and Sterlitamak. In the new areas the condition of the population was much the same as in the middle Volga districts. The country was less populous and less fertile. The problems of the delivery of relief were more difficult because the villages and towns were more scattered, the railway lines fewer and less efficient, the population more primitive, and the government administration even less efficient than in western Russia. Communication between these outposts and A.R.A. Russian headquarters was incredibly slow. During the first weeks in Tzaritzin telegrams took fifteen days coming from Moscow, and from Moscow to Orenburg they

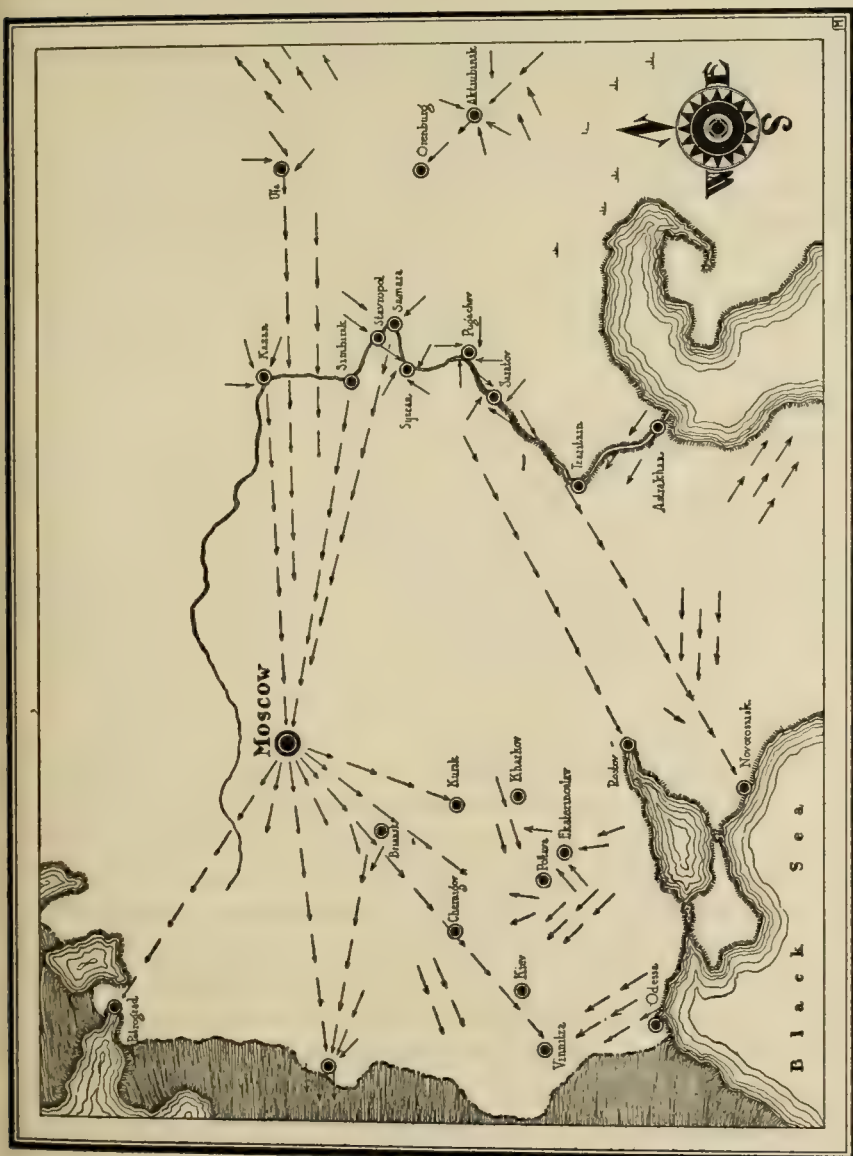
<sup>17</sup> From a *Memorandum of the Work of the A.R.A. District of Ufa*, by Wm. J. Kelley.

<sup>18</sup> The first food train reached Tzaritzin October 27, 1921; feeding began November 3. At Orenburg the dates were November 12 and 17; at Ufa November 12 and 18.



required fourteen days. In none of these new districts was relief from the Soviet Government or from any other source being given outside the principal towns, and in these towns the meager supplies available were both irregular and of poor quality. The few government kitchens in the cities of Tzaritzin and Ufa were on the point of closing when the American food arrived. These kitchens were immediately taken over by the A.R.A. and operated according to its system. In Orenburg, the only relief was in a single institute for children, supported by private funds. This support was inadequate, and the home was indescribably filthy, possessing neither beds nor blankets, while the children were dying at an appalling rate. The estimated deaths in Orenburg city alone were placed at 150 a day. Many of the victims were refugees, with whom the town was crowded. One of the worst spots was at Minnevarde Dvor on the left bank of the Ural River, just outside of Orenburg. This was the bazaar to which the caravans of Asia came in the old days. After the declaration of war with Germany it was made into an internment camp for Germans, Hungarians and Austrians. Later it became a concentration camp for refugees from the Volga who had started for Tashkent, but had been unable to get any farther than this place, where they were dying at the rate of 25 or 30 a day. At Orenburg the American organizer Lyons also found several thousand Polish war refugees, huddled in box cars in the railway yards, waiting to be repatriated. Four hundred and fifty died before the train left and it was expected that at least two hundred and fifty more would die en route. So great was the panic of the officials of the Kirghiz Republic, of which Orenburg is the capital, that when the A.R.A. arrived the Government was planning to collect a large group of the strongest Kirghiz and send them to Tashkent, where they could be kept alive and strong during the winter, and in the spring be brought back to do the planting.

In the streets of Orenburg there was a stratum of filth six inches deep, which had been accumulating during the last two or three years as a result of the common practice of throwing kitchen refuse and the contents of cesspools into the thoroughfare. When the Americans arrived this filth was imbedded in



Refugee Movements, 1921-1922.

three feet of snow over which the starving refugees dragged themselves to beg, and upon which they fell when finally overcome by hunger. Somewhat similar conditions existed in Ufa, where, according to the official reports of the city, from the first of July to the middle of September (1921), the bodies of five hundred people who had died of starvation were picked up in the streets.

Institutions which rivaled the children's homes in Ufa were the prisons. In the city prison with a capacity for nine hundred people, between 1100 and 1200 persons were confined for political and other offenses and during a period of three and a half months, one hundred and sixty-nine of these died of starvation, and two hundred and seventy-six of disease. In an attempt to relieve the prison congestion the officials sent a trainload of three hundred to Ekaterinburg. En route, at Cheliabinsk, forty-five sick and nine dead were removed from the train. Others were taken out at other way stations, until on arrival at the destination only sixty-one of the original three hundred prisoners remained, and of these forty-five were desperately ill. Among these prisoners were not only criminals but others, whose crime was the color of their political beliefs.

Food conditions in the Ufa and Orenburg districts were particularly bad, because a great number of the population were not engaged in grain production. In the mining districts of the Urals all operations had ceased or were reduced to almost nothing, and the workers were without means. The principal industry of both the Bashkirs and Kirghiz was raising cattle and horses. During the revolution, however, their herds had been driven off by the White and Red armies, neither well disciplined, which chased each other back and forth across this part of the country. The Kirghiz especially were in a pitiful situation, being a nomadic people, living a precarious existence even under the most favorable conditions. Driven in from the steppes by hunger, they overwhelmed the border villages, where many died and others barely escaped the same fate, thanks to the A.R.A. kitchens.

It was only natural that in these far-away cities the crimes of violence, which were surprisingly frequent in the country farther west, should be even more numerous. In Orenburg,



particularly, was life held cheap, although similar conditions obtained in others of the eastern districts. No one was allowed on the streets of Orenburg after 9 o'clock and the Americans made it a rule never to travel about on foot, if it could be avoided, and always to be armed. The same conditions existed in villages, and one American tells of spending the night in a small village, where on the following morning he was told that eight murders had been committed during the night. In spite of the official precautions, the bodies of persons who had been murdered and then stripped of their clothing were frequently found in the streets. One case, where only the head of the victim had been found, led an investigation to the market, where it was discovered that the murderer had cut up the body of his victim and sold the flesh to a Persian, who in turn had sold it in the bazaar. This case resulted in the issuance of an order by the city authorities forbidding the sale of meat-balls, cutlets, and all forms of hashed meats. The Board of Health of the city published a notice recommending that the bones of animals be ground up and mixed with flour as a food substitute. The officials gave the encouraging information that this bread substitute had a nutritive value of 25 per cent. more than rye bread, and in spite of its unpleasant smell and taste, it really looked like good bread.

It was perhaps to be expected that the Communist officials who governed these remote districts would possess less ability than those of other sections, where the amenities and rewards of political service were greater. No Communist who had risen far in the party councils would of his own choice remain at a post in regions where life was not only uncertain, but extremely unpleasant. In these times the Department of Health was obviously one of the most important divisions of the Government, but in three of the gubernias which were included in the A.R.A. Ufa-Urals District, the chiefs of the Gubernia Boards of Health were in one case a barber, in another a factory worker, and in the third a veterinary's apprentice, while the President of the Ufa Gubispolkom was a tailor who could neither read nor write. It, of course, does not necessarily follow that a barber or a factory worker could not become an efficient chief of the Health Department, but

the chances are somewhat against it. In these districts it was not easy to find competent personnel and English-speaking persons were practically non-existent. The Tzaritzin officials produced with great pride a man who, they declared, would be able to fill the bill as official interpreter. It was discovered, however, that he had learned his English by diligent study of textbooks, but had never heard a word of the language spoken. The Tzaritzin interpreter situation was somewhat eased by the sudden appearance of a very bedraggled individual, who called one morning and asked who had won the last World's Series. He, it appeared, was a German from the Baltic Provinces, who had spent some time in Chicago, where he had learned a little English. He had also learned some Russian in his childhood and, although sadly deficient in both languages, was of great assistance. During the whole of the operation in Tzaritzin, however, the instructions to personnel and official negotiations with the government were carried on through the medium of an interpreter who could speak French and Russian, but not English. Attempts to supply Orenburg with interpreters imported from Moscow never met with success, for after two or three days in that wild and uncivilized town neither arguments, the promise of reward in this world and the next, nor anything else, could persuade the Moscow citizen to tarry longer.

Transportation was a more staggering problem than personnel. There were no railroads, and only one river in the Bashkir Republic, navigable for a few weeks in the spring, and foodstuffs had to be transported by sledge, distances ranging from 25 to 66 miles. The single-track line which ran from Samara to Tashkent served Orenburg and the northern part of the Kirghiz Republic. It was undependable at best and during the winter months was closed for weeks at a time. But the real problem here was getting the food from this line to the villages. A sub-district base was established in the town of Orsk. A spur from the Tashkent line runs in the direction of Orsk but stops at a river three miles from the city. The usual means of crossing the river was by ferry, which ran every two hours. In winter, teams could cross on the ice, but when winter came the spur line gave up the struggle, stopped

all activity, and waited for spring. Farther down on the Tashkent line was another sub-district base at Aktubinsk. From this point, shaggy, complaining camels, who seemed to be able to carry on without food as well as without water, hauled the food to far villages. The longest haul was 110 miles and the average from this town was over thirty-four miles.

With all their obstacles, the organization of the towns and villages progressed surprisingly fast and kitchens began to bring health to children and courage to their parents in hundreds of villages where the name of America had never been heard. By December 1st, seventy days after the signing of the agreement permitting relief, 568,020 persons were receiving each day a balanced ration of American food in 2,997 A.R.A. feeding points set up in 191 towns and villages in the regions of greatest need from Petrograd on the Baltic to Astrakhan on the Caspian.



## CHAPTER V

### OFFICIAL RELATIONS

#### CENTRAL ORGANIZATION OF THE RUSSIAN UNIT

LESS striking than the growth of the field work, but of equal importance was the development of the central organization—the general staff as it were—of the Russian Unit, which during these weeks passed from the ticklish period of experimentation to a settled method of procedure, maintained thereafter with but slight revision to correspond with the expansion and contraction of the program. In a similar fashion the Soviet Government shaped and elaborated its policy towards the A.R.A., and by the middle of November both parties to this enterprise had gained a definite idea of their relationship. This shaking down period was an important one, for it was the time of testing the capacity of parties, which had come to this enterprise from opposite directions, to proceed—if not hand in hand, at least side by side—to its accomplishment.

As soon as the Riga Agreement was signed, Brown, on instructions from Hoover, informed Litvinov of the selection of Colonel William N. Haskell as Director in Russia of the A.R.A. Haskell was a West Pointer with a distinguished record in the World War both as a line and as a staff officer, serving in the latter capacity on the Staff of the American Second Army. His selection for the Russian post was based, however, not on his military record, but on his success in handling two difficult jobs for the A.R.A. in 1919, the first as Chief of its Mission to Rumania, and later in charge of its program in Armenia and the Caucasus. On the latter assignment, he also held a commission from the Supreme Council as Allied High Commissioner in Armenia. In both, Haskell had shown an ability to get things done, and, equally important, an ability to get them done without entangling himself

or the A.R.A. in political and diplomatic intrigue which, like fresh tar, smirched the hands and clung to the unwary feet of many venturers in that region. Haskell approached his Russian mission with a mind uncluttered with theories as to the immediate or historical significance of the Bolshevik Revolution. Whatever his opinions may have been about the defects of the Communist government, he felt no urge to set matters right; it was no more a part of his job, as he saw it, to lead wayward Communists back to the green pastures of capitalism than it was to prevail upon atheistic commissars to embrace religion. Temperamentally, Haskell was in hearty accord with the A.R.A. policy, which was, not to reform the Russians, to improve their minds, or save their souls, but to feed the starving, give medicine to the sick and aid to the destitute.

Haskell sailed from New York for Russia on September 2, accompanied by a number of men who had been selected to serve as members of his Russian Unit staff. After a short conference in London with Brown, the European director of all the operations, Haskell and his party hurried on to Moscow, where they arrived September 21. With Haskell's arrival on the scene, the organization, well grounded by Carroll and his associates, but of necessity tentative in many particulars, began rapidly to take definite shape.

The staff work of the Russian Unit fell into several well defined categories, such as supply, medical, food remittances, finance and accounting, traffic. For each category a "division" was set up. Two of the divisions stand out not only because of the magnitude of the work which they performed, but because what they did was supplementary to, rather than an integral part of, the main business of relief, which was feeding the hungry. The first of these was the *Medical Division* which had charge of the medical surveys, the reception and distribution of medical supplies (embracing thousands, and ranging all the way from complicated laboratory equipment to castor oil), the inoculation and sanitation campaigns. This Division was represented in each district by an American physician. The other great Division of this type was that of *Food Remittances*, which had the extremely difficult task of deliver-

ing specified packages of food (and later of clothing) to persons scattered all over Russia. These packages were the gifts of friends and relatives in all parts of the world who had bought remittances from the A.R.A. offices in America and Europe. Upon the purchase of such a remittance the A.R.A. obligated itself to deliver the specified amount of food to the designated beneficiary, if he could be found. Finding him and getting his package of food to him, under the conditions which then existed in Russia, was something of a task. Yet the Food Remittance Division succeeded in delivering nearly twelve million dollars worth of such packages.

Of the other divisions concerned chiefly with the feeding program, *Supply* and *Traffic* were of first importance. *Supply* kept track of food stocks from the moment they left America until they were distributed to kitchens in Russia. *Supply* had the complicated job of seeing to it that the stocks in each district were kept up in each commodity, so that the balanced ration could be used and, at the same time, that there were sufficient supplies to enable the District Supervisor to increase his feeding in accordance with his authorization from headquarters. *Supply* having determined where the various parts of the cargo of newly arrived ships were to go, it was the business of *Traffic* to see that they got there. *Traffic* followed the shipment from the time it was loaded on the train until it was unloaded into the warehouses of the districts. The problems of *Traffic* will presently be revealed. In Russia, as in all other A.R.A. operations, accounting constituted an extremely important phase of activity. There was, of course, a large accounting section in the European headquarters at London, and the final accounting department in New York. In Russia the *Accounting Division* concerned itself not alone with the financial obligations and activities of the Unit, but with the disposition of its commodities. Under the A.R.A. system the Americans were required to secure a receipt from the committees or organizations which finally turned the relief supplies over to the consumer. This receipt discharged the responsibility of the American distributor to the Accounting Division.

Other divisions were *Liaison*, which performed unofficially certain consular functions that devolved upon the A.R.A., as a

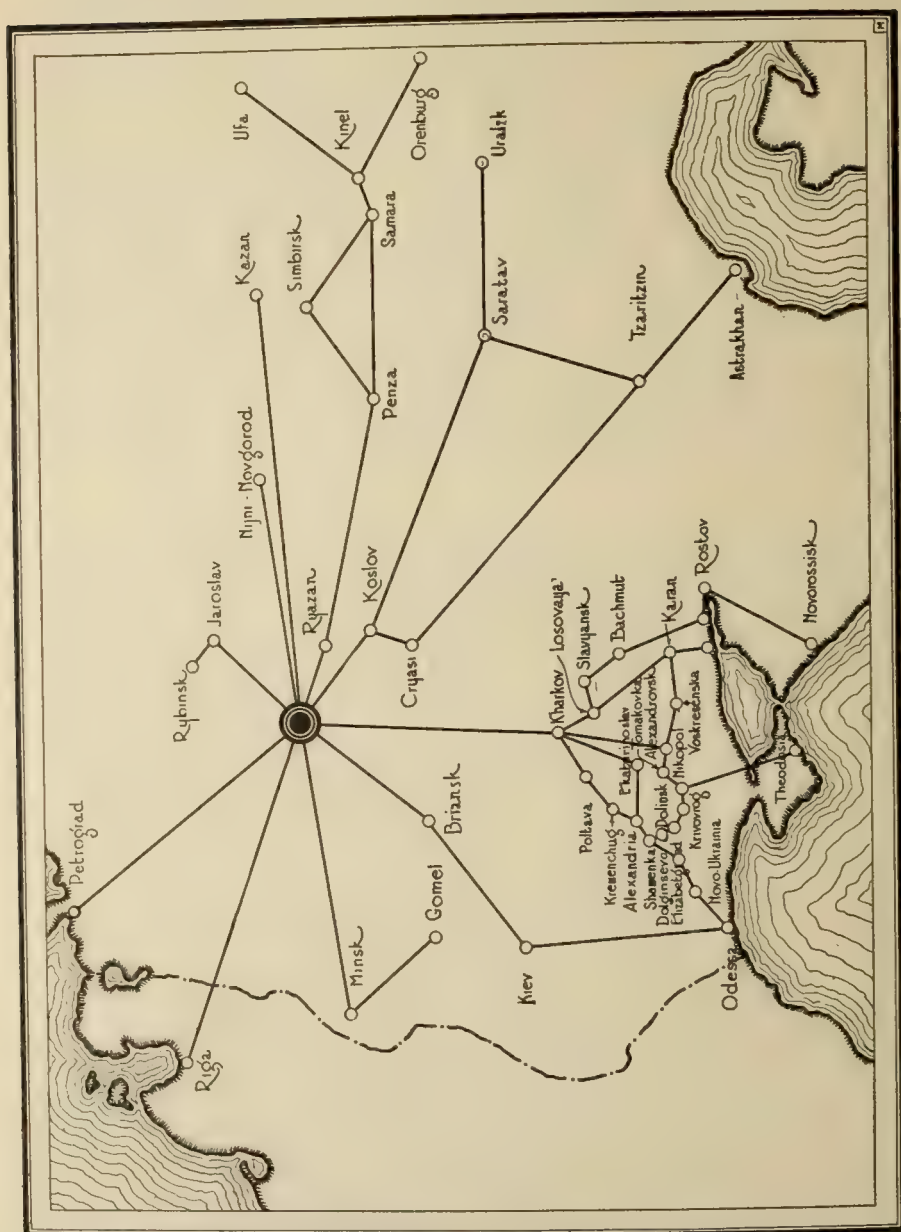


result of the clause in the Riga Agreement, providing for the repatriation of American citizens in Russia <sup>1</sup>; *Communications*, which handled relations with the Russian press and with foreign correspondents; *Historical*, which gathered and collated information statistical and general, derived from all sources concerning the conditions in the areas in which the A.R.A. was interested. A *Motor Transport Division* performed important service for several months. An *Inspection Division* existed in the early and the later days of the operations. During the interim, the functions of inspection were performed by individuals attached to the Director's office. The activities of all the divisions were centralized and coördinated, through the office of the Executive Assistant, who, of course, was in immediate and continuous contact with the Director and bore the relation to him and to the organization of a chief of staff.

The field organization of districts and the work of the District Supervisor has been already indicated. The only other type of field organization to come into existence was at the ports, where during the days of greatest shipping activity there were A.R.A. Port Officers. These Port Officers, though in the territory controlled by the District Supervisor, reported directly to Moscow. Their activities pertained exclusively to the unloading of vessels and the reloading of supplies into trains, in accordance with the directions which they received from the Supply Division.

Each District Supervisor had American assistants who divided among themselves the responsibilities of the district, which corresponded to the responsibilities assumed by the Divisions at Moscow headquarters. One of the Americans would handle, let us say, the supply and food remittances; another, finance and government relations; a third, district organization, inspection, and control; a fourth, the city and institutional feeding, and transportation. Each district had an American secretary who performed not only secretarial functions, but acted as the general manager of the headquarters' office and very often performed in addition some of the functions mentioned above.

<sup>1</sup> Chapter XIX.



A.R.A. Courier Routes in Russia.

## LIAISON WITH THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

Within two weeks after their arrival, it was all too clear to the A.R.A. that the system of liaison suggested by Kamenev could not support the strain. Kamenev had not foreseen the speed or the scope of the A.R.A. development. Moreover, as a member of the inner kitchen cabinet of the Communist Party and chief administrative officer of Moscow city and Gubernia, he was an extremely busy man, too busy to give personal attention to the A.R.A. His deputies were useless, for though clothed in official authority, they were small fry in the Party and hence futile, incapable figures in the habiliments of command. Seeking a remedy, Carroll begged Kamenev to appoint some one of sufficient standing from whom the A.R.A. could get prompt action. The result was a decree <sup>2</sup> (September 21, 1921), from the All Russian Central Executive Committee directing all officials to act on A.R.A. requests within forty-eight hours, and designating Comrade A. I. Palmer as the Government's general representative with the A.R.A., and Comrade Lobatchev as representative in transportation matters. It was an amiable and utterly futile gesture. Palmer and Lobatchev were agreeable, well-meaning men, but they had no particular standing in the Party. Without that they could get no action whatever out of sluggish, indifferent government bureaus. They were just another encumbrance for the A.R.A.

Then suddenly the Government took a new tack. Palmer and Lobatchev were relieved of the authority they had never been able to exercise, and in their stead appeared Comrade Alexander Eiduk, with the resplendent title of, "Representative Plenipotentiary of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic with All Foreign Relief Organizations." The Americans were delighted, and Carroll and Burland returned from their introduction to the Plenipotentiary convinced that their prayers had at last been answered. Eiduk was unquestionably a personality in Communist affairs, and his aggressive, pugnacious manner gave promise of prompt results. Under the new dispensation, the A.R.A. was to look to this one man in all matters,—

<sup>2</sup> *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XIX, 6.



for rail and water transportation, for visas, living quarters, repairs, minor supplies, gasoline, labor, fuel, and, finally, official statistical information relative to the conditions and needs of different parts of the country. There would be no dealings with powerless intermediaries, no more futile pursuit of authority which, like a will'o'the wisp, led from one department to another and was forever just out of reach. Now one need only turn to Eiduk and that formidable individual would do the rest. It seemed—as it proved—too good to be true.

Not only at the center, but in the districts, where emissaries of Eiduk began presently to appear, did the new liaison system appear to be cause for rejoicing. In spite of the fact that the local officials of the gubernias were friendly and eager to coöperate, factors beyond their control set limits to that co-operation. This was the period of transition from military Communism to the half-caste capitalism of the New Economic Policy. The transition was difficult and painful, for the two systems were more antagonistic than the Communists were willing publicly to admit, and between the two lay an economic no man's land, desolate and barren. The N.E.P. decreed that goods and services were no longer at the command of the state, but could be sold by the producer for something more tangible than the promise of other goods and services in return. The needs of the state were to be met no longer by confiscation, but by taxation. This was all very well for the Center to decree, but what of the gubernias, whose people produced so little that they were nearly naked and actually starving? The gubernia governments—particularly in the famine zones—were hard put to it to support their own employees, to say nothing of helping the ruined, starving peasants, even before the A.R.A. came with new demands on the government's resources. These A.R.A. demands were not for subsidies, but for services and materials necessary to get the food from the railway cars to the hungry. In some localities, particularly the more remote, the officials ignored N.E.P. and all its works, and commandeered right and left as if military Communism were still pure and undefiled. But in the larger towns thus to ignore the decree of the Center was impolitic and unsafe, and it was in these towns, usually the distributing centers of the districts, that

lack of resources in the gubernia exchequers began seriously to hold back the A.R.A. program. Established feeding points began to run short of food and the opening of new kitchens was delayed when workmen refused to unload supplies until they were paid for their last job. Carriers refused to bring supplies from warehouses to city kitchens and institutions, or to transfer them to subdistrict bases for the same reason. Office employees, guards, inspectors, and kitchen managers resigned when the wages and the ration they were to receive from the government fell a month or two in arrears. In the distribution of their own relief, which at this time was slight and consisted chiefly of seed grain, the local governments paid for services with the commodities they were handling. Inevitably, relief supplies handled in this way tended to disappear before they reached the designated beneficiary.

The A.R.A. naturally had no intention of resorting to such a system. Its American supplies had been given to feed the starving, and not those who happened to belong to town labor organizations or to possess a horse and cart. Moreover, the Soviet government had agreed to meet all such charges<sup>3</sup> and undoubtedly possessed sufficient resources for the purpose, if they could be made available. The District Supervisors found exhortations and appeals to the gubernia officials equally ineffective. One could not get blood from a turnip. Then followed appeals to Moscow, from the local officers to their superiors, from the Americans to their headquarters, beseeching the central government to intervene and provide the funds which they (and not the famine guberniás, as the latter pointed out) had guaranteed. But nothing happened. The Center seemingly was reluctant to entrust to the gubernia officials the funds they so persistently asked for.

Then came the appointment of Eiduk, the Plenipotentiary, and presently a whole flock of lesser plenipotentiaries, satellites of this resplendent planet, swam into being. There was at least one of these lesser plenipotentiaries, reflecting the power of his master, in each A.R.A. district. They were responsible to Eiduk alone; they were to perform functions similar to his in the more restricted field; and, momentarily of

<sup>3</sup> Riga Agreement, par. 4, in Appendix A, Doc. I.

chief importance, they were to be supplied from the Center with funds sufficient to solve the threatening financial problem. This did not solve the problem—it never was satisfactorily solved, but it did ease the pressure somewhat, especially in those districts where the character of the subplenipotentiary was strong enough to discharge the unfamiliar responsibility of disbursing funds running into large figures, if not into great value.<sup>4</sup>

#### NEGOTIATIONS WITH EIDUK

The A.R.A. was still congratulating itself on the probable success of the new liaison arrangement, when it received unmistakable intimations that Eiduk had other offices to perform besides plucking thorns from the tortuous path of coöperative endeavor. The first intimation came when Haskell, shortly after his arrival, explained to Eiduk the scope of the proposed medical relief program. The Plenipotentiary expressed the satisfaction of his government at this much needed aid and suggested that a new agreement be drawn up whereby the Soviet Commissariat of Health (Narkomzdrav) would cheerfully undertake the distribution of these medical supplies, granting the A.R.A. a hazy, undefined part in the supervision. Haskell replied that the A.R.A. was compelled by its responsibility to the donors to control the distribution and that no new agreement was necessary, the Riga document being sufficient to cover this activity carried on, as it would be, by one of the divisions of the Unit.<sup>5</sup>

The second intimation came in connection with the negotiation of the Food Remittance agreement.<sup>6</sup> Briefly, the proposal was that the A.R.A. be given the right and the necessary guarantees to deliver to individuals in Russia standardized food packages paid for by persons outside Russia, who were desirous

<sup>4</sup> Eventually it was agreed that the A.R.A. Headquarters in Moscow should prepare a monthly budget covering the disbursements of all districts. The Central Soviet Government thereupon turned over the funds to meet this consolidated budget to the A.R.A. Accounting Division which forwarded the funds to the District Supervisors. The assurance of a regular supply of funds relieved the Supervisors of an harassing problem and the Central Authorities were glad to let the A.R.A. become the shock absorber for the insistent demands of the districts for funds.

<sup>5</sup> Chapter XVIII for an account of the Medical Relief.

<sup>6</sup> Chapter XVII for details of the operation of the Food Remittance Plan.



of aiding relatives or friends whom they could not reach through commercial channels. A scheme of this kind had been amazingly successful in Central Europe, where during a period of eighteen months in 1920-21 the A.R.A. had delivered food packages to the value of \$8,288,848. The scheme was successful not only from the point of view of the individuals served, but from that of the state. It brought to states with a food deficit and a depreciated currency very considerable quantities of food without putting a further strain on the exchange. It tended, moreover, to stabilize the price of local food, which otherwise soared steadily beyond the reach of those most in need of it. Finally, this plan produced a margin of profit in the case of Central Europe amounting to \$2,506,103, which was used for general relief. E. G. Burland, who had been in charge of Food Drafts for the Austrian Mission and had been appointed Chief of the Food Remittance Division in Russia, explained all this to Eiduk and how and why it would be of particular benefit to his country. But Eiduk was unmoved. He was darkly suspicious. No argument could eradicate his suspicions that in some fashion the scheme was a vehicle of counter-revolution, but he was finally convinced that he would be able to check any activity which seemed to confirm his fears. The Agreement was at last completed and signed on October 19, 1921. The A.R.A. was now free to push the two great supplementary operations—medical relief and food remittances.

#### LIAISON AT WORK

Very shortly after assuming office Eiduk issued Order No. 17, which emphasized the following points: <sup>7</sup>

(1) The A.R.A. has been admitted by the R.S.F.S.R. to work in the gubernias of the Volga Valley.

(2) The Soviet Government has appropriated large sums to pay the salaries of A.R.A. (Russian) workers, to equip kitchens, and transport food.

(3) All local authorities and all people are called upon to assist the A.R.A.

<sup>7</sup> *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXI, 19-20.

(4) Local authorities are warned that they must execute all orders from Comrade Eiduk or his representatives and that Russians employed by the A.R.A. must discharge their duties conscientiously, not through fear, but on principle.

(5) Attempts by employees of the A.R.A. to take advantage of their position for selfish ends or for propaganda will be prosecuted in the most merciless manner.

(6) Russian citizens employed by the A.R.A. must not forget that they are still responsible to the local authorities of the R.S.F.S.R.

(7) The population is urged to see that the A.R.A. employees discharge their duty conscientiously.

(8) Dishonesty, laziness, self-interest, misuse of power, agitation to undermine the Soviet Government, on the part of A.R.A. employees will be uprooted by Mr. Eiduk in the most merciless manner.

It was ominously significant that of the eight points only two dealt with the matter of coöperation with the A.R.A., and five dealt with the behavior of Russians employed by the A.R.A. That this ratio of five to two represented Eiduk's idea of the relative amount of time and energy his organization should devote to watching the A.R.A. on one hand, and to assisting it on the other was demonstrated first in Moscow. The A.R.A. headquarters had reasonably assumed that the new liaison office would be the hopper into which all requests for transport, for fuel, for warehouses, for labor and so forth would be poured and after a few turns of the crank by Eiduk there would emerge locomotives and cars, coal and gasoline, stevedores and freight handlers. The requests went into the hopper, but there were no results. Investigation showed that the Plenipotentiary and his associates were not turning the crank. The new machine, far from speeding the processes of coöperation, proved to be just one more bureaucratic unit, one more hazard through which essential business had to be driven. Haskell then began to apply such pressure as the course of events put into his hands. On November 11, 1921, he wrote Eiduk as follows:

"I regret exceedingly to be compelled to bring to your notice the serious situation in which the American Relief Adminis-

tration finds itself at the present moment in its endeavor to carry out the important work on which it has embarked, and to call particular attention to the lack of coöperation which the American Relief Administration is receiving from the Russian Government and the failure of the Russian Government to carry out their part of the agreement signed at Riga, August 20th. It would be impossible to enumerate all the broken promises and the obstacles placed in the way of progress in our work by officials of the Soviet Government. In most cases the officials who have obstructed our work have been, I believe, subordinates in the various bureaus, but that fact is immaterial, as when obstruction is made, the work stops."

After enumerating cases in point, Haskell referred to the possibility of increasing the relief, plans for which were already under way in America:

"However, I am inclined to feel many misgivings as to the propriety of lending my influence and recommendation to any further assistance for Russia so long as the Russian Government through its representatives is unable to handle and provide the necessary means for handling the operations already under way within this country. If it requires so much pleading, letter writing, and delay to accomplish our present program, I view with great doubt the ability of the Russian Government to carry through any relief program which will double, triple, or quadruple the coöperation necessitated at the present time and which might require perhaps five or ten times the means now required from the Russian Government."

Eiduk promised immediate action; all matters complained of would immediately be set right. Some of them were, but in the meantime a much more serious situation had arisen as a result of the activities of the lesser Plenipotentiaries who had become established in the Volga districts. Wails of protest, punctuated by howls of rage, came over the wires to A.R.A. headquarters. The liaison machinery in the districts was as far from specifications as in the capital.

Eiduk's district representatives lost no time in making their presence felt and in showing that the five to two ratio of Order No. 17 obtained for them as for their chief. Some even appeared to make the ratio five to nothing. Russian citizens



employed by the A.R.A. learned to their sorrow that they were even more responsible to the Soviet power than ever before. The method by which this was demonstrated was painfully familiar to these Russians, who had lived through the Terror. The first blow fell at Samara. On the 4th of November (1921) without warning or explanation, the Russian who held the most responsible position in the A.R.A. organization, was seized and thrown into prison. The following day a woman inspector was arrested under similar conditions. A few days later (November 11) the Kazan Plenipotentiary followed the lead of his Samara colleague, causing the summary arrest and imprisonment of the Russian manager of the A.R.A. office, and the chief woman kitchen inspector of the city. In Saratov, it was the manager of the principal warehouse who was arrested. In Simbirsk, Eiduk's representative made a futile but earnest effort to have the A.R.A. District Supervisor recalled. In Tzaritzin, a few weeks later the officials imprisoned the most important Russian on the A.R.A. staff. Even the Moscow headquarters office did not escape, for here one of the women translators was summoned from her work and imprisoned by the Cheka, which later made the ingenuous explanation that, though it had been gathering incriminating evidence against this young lady for several weeks, it was unaware that she was employed by the A.R.A.

This epidemic of arrests threatened to terrorize into ineffectiveness the whole A.R.A. distributing organization, just as it was beginning to take shape and show the results of the desperately energetic efforts of the Americans. If the Soviet police continued to drag off to prison the A.R.A.'s most valued Russian workers without any charges being made against them, or on the vague, unsubstantiated accusation of counter-revolutionary activity, there would inevitably follow confusion and delay in the A.R.A. program at the moment when delay could be measured in the deaths of helpless children. Haskell and his associates recognized this as an attack on the fundamental basis of their work. It was not merely a violation of agreement; it was a matter of life and death that the relief machinery should not falter. To Haskell's vigorous protest Eiduk replied (20 November) somewhat haughtily that his

government could not and would not recognize the right of the A.R.A. to confer immunity of arrest upon Russian citizens. Haskell retorted that the A.R.A. had no such intention, nor did it intend to shield Russians who broke Soviet laws. At the same time, he had no intention of acquiescing in the paralysis of the relief effort through the systematic violation by Soviet officials of their government's solemn engagements.

Argument unsupported made no serious impression on men like Eiduk, schooled in the unrestricted warfare of revolution where engagements are made only to be broken, and all means are justified by the end. The Plenipotentiary, and others like him, had to be convinced that the A.R.A. meant business and that it would resist this assault on the whole relief plan with something more easily comprehended by a hard-shelled revolutionist than a dignified protest. There was only one thing to do. In Kazan, Wahren, the District Supervisor on being refused any statement from the local Plenipotentiary as to the reasons for the arrest of the A.R.A. Russian personnel, ordered the suspension of all movement of American food in that district until charges should be produced or the prisoners released. Results were immediate. It was easier to produce prisoners than charges; hence, the prisoners were released. In Tzaritzin, the matter required a much longer period for adjustment, for Eiduk had seen fit to inject himself into the controversy and had ordered the prisoner brought to Moscow that he might personally appear against him. Bowden, the District Supervisor at Tzaritzin, made careful, painstaking investigation, and on the basis of his findings, Haskell (25 February, 1922) sent the following plain statement of his intentions to the Plenipotentiary:

"The operation of the American Relief Administration cannot be subjected to these petty annoyances and personal persecutions on the part of local politicians, and neither can the American Relief Administration be placed in the position where intelligent men are afraid to accept employment under it for fear of being persecuted for such employment.

"After mature consideration, I consider that it is quite essential to our freedom of action as guaranteed by the Riga Agreement that this employee, who, so far as known, has engaged in

no action against the Government, should be released from arrest and reinstated in his work at Tzaritzin until such time as the Government can show to the entire satisfaction of Mr. Bowden, District Supervisor at Tzaritzin, that this individual has actually, in fact, been guilty of some criminal activity against the Russian Government, since he has been in the employ of the American Relief Administration.

"In view of all the above, I have authorized Mr. Bowden, District Supervisor at Tzaritzin, to use his judgment as to what particular section of the Tzaritzin Government shall receive relief supplies. I am not inclined to insist that he shall feed the city of Tzaritzin if, in his judgment on the ground, he has reason to believe that the local authorities are injecting political matters into the relief work there. There are so many people to be fed in Russia that I can find many places to use that part of our relief supplies which were originally intended to be distributed in the city of Tzaritzin.

"Furthermore, I think it most unfortunate that you have injected your personality into this controversy as indicated by the telegram you dispatched recently to Tzaritzin, directing that this man be sent to Moscow and that you would appear against him. I believe that both your action in matters of this kind, as well as my own, should be free from any personal animosity, and that decisions should be taken in matters of this kind simply depending on the merits of the case itself as presented by the facts."

It was not necessary to discontinue the feeding in Tzaritzin city. Eiduk gave way and agreed that the A.R.A. should be notified, and specific charges be produced before its employees were arrested. This did not, of course, put an end to the practice of arresting Russians employed by the A.R.A. on the vague charge of counter-revolution, but occurrences of this kind became more isolated and infrequent, and it no longer appeared to be the definite policy of the Government to get control of the feeding organization by terror and intimidation. Some time later, it is true, the Plenipotentiary in Samara, without warning, arrested fifteen A.R.A. employees, and in Saratov the agents of Eiduk's astute representative succeeded in placing some of the Russian inspectors of the A.R.A. in prison for brief intervals. One attempt was made here to arrest an



American inspector. In most of the districts, however, after long and sharp controversies, arrests were discontinued and the A.R.A. contention of the right of previous notification was recognized in fact as well as in theory. Some curious incidents resulted. In one case a Russian A.R.A. sub-district inspector, who happened to be a member of the Communist Party and who had been recommended by Soviet officials, misappropriated American products, was caught, and confessed. But before making the arrest, the local official wired to the District Supervisor for permission to do so. On another occasion, the Cheka of Simbirsk raided a harmless meeting of the local engineering society. Before carrying out the arrest, however, the chief of the police detachments mounted the rostrum and asked if there was anyone present who was employed by the A.R.A. One engineer said that he was and was ordered to leave. The police then proceeded with the day's work and herded the rest of the engineers off to prison. No charges were ever preferred against them.

#### EFFECTIVE INSULATION

Aside from the trouble they caused by the attempted intimidation of the A.R.A. Russian staff, the liaison succeeded in creating a damaging interruption in the development of friendly coöperation between the Americans and local officials. This was due to two factors: the nature of the organization that Eiduk built, and the character of those he selected to compose it.

The Eiduk organization appears to have been modeled on Trotsky's system of military commissars. When the War Commissar was creating the Red Army, he found it necessary to employ former Czarist officers and other experts who were not Communists and whom, therefore, he could not trust. To get around this difficulty he appointed reliable party workers as military commissars charged with the responsibility of keeping the experts in the paths of loyalty to the Soviets and of spreading the true faith among the troops. The military commissars, representing the Communist hierarchy and exercising its arbitrary authority over the heads of the non-Com-

munist officers, provided effective insulation between these military experts and the men whom they theoretically commanded. The relief liaison organization aimed at a similar insulation between the Americans on one hand, and their Russian staff and the population generally, on the other. The intimidation tactics described above were an attempt to establish the authority of the Plenipotentiary representatives in the A.R.A. feeding organization, like that of the military commissars in the army. The regulation that all relief matters pass through the hands of the Plenipotentiaries was less for coöperation, as events proved, than to keep the control of this important operation in the hands of the Communist center, and to protect local officials, less firm in the faith, from the subtle poison of contact with these unregenerate bourgeois democrats.

The insulation aspect of the liaison scheme is illustrated by the case of the Uralsk Gubernia which was a part of the A.R.A. Saratov District. The officials and people of the Uralsk, one of the most impoverished gubernias of eastern Russia, had given whole-hearted, capable coöperation through the medium of a local man, selected by the officials as their liaison representative with the A.R.A. In spite of this Comrade Beerman, Eiduk's representative in Saratov, made repeated attempts to have one of his own appointees installed in place of the man from Uralsk. The local Soviet successfully resisted until Beerman went to Moscow and laid his case before the supreme authority, which promptly ordered the change to be made, explaining to A.R.A. headquarters that the Uralsk officials had been remiss in giving the A.R.A. the assistance to which it was entitled. As soon as Beerman's agent appeared, trouble in Uralsk began and continued as long as relief in that region was given.

The real purpose of the liaison organization was revealed no less by the character of the Plenipotentiary and his representatives and assistants. Eiduk himself was a Lett, a race which has given many stalwarts to the ranks of Russian Communism. Experience in some of the activities which play an important part in large scale relief, such as transportation, the handling of supplies, public health, or even public administration would have been an asset to one presumably selected to

collaborate in the administration of relief. Eiduk was a policeman. By a heavy handed ruthlessness, he had risen from a position of no great prominence in the struggle against counter-revolution at Archangel in 1918 to membership in the collegium of the Cheka, that terrifying, avenging arm of Communism which employed in the support of revolution the methods used by the notorious "Third Section" of the Czar's time in its suppression. The Plenipotentiary was undoubtedly a loyal Communist, a trusty henchman, and faithful to those ideals which he was capable of apprehending. He could hate the enemies of his party and distrust those whose devotion was not vouched for in high places. His own experience supported his natural bent in this direction. While on a machine gun patrol of the Riga-Moscow railroad, his detachment had been attacked by a squadron of White cavalry and Eiduk, severely wounded, was left for dead by his enemies. Within the Party Eiduk found his place in the Left Wing with the dogmatists and die hards, not because he sympathized with them in the theoretical controversies that continually threatened the party unity, but because temperamentally, like many others, he was an under-dog, opposed to concession or accommodation, striving with hard blows and with stratagem to defeat the enemies that filled the world. By 1921 the enemies of the Soviet power, internal and external, were quiescent, and time hung heavy on the hands of this indomitable man, until he received the assignment as shepherd to the foreigners who came to Russia to feed the hungry.

The Plenipotentiary was indubitably energetic and forceful after his kind, and this energy and force he applied with a celerity not characteristically Russian to building his insulating organization of reliable materials. He chose his principal assistants and representatives on the same basis that he had been chosen. They were expert or experienced in no field but espionage. But their loyalty to the Party, their readiness to obey its orders had been tested and proved in the Cheka or as military commissars. There was, for example, the former sailor from the Baltic fleet, and military commissar of a Red Army Division, who tried to control the relief in his district, by bullying and browbeating Russian workers and local of-



ficials, and by censoring or countermanding the instructions of the Americans. His assistant, who supplied the finesse that the sailor lacked, was a shrewd young Jew not long from America, where he had learned English. In another district a German Jew, who had been, according to his account, a spy during the war, showed a diabolical astuteness in his methods. The fruit of his endeavors continually came to light, first in one place, and then in another, but the author himself—to the despair of the harassed Americans—never committed an overt act that would have justified an appeal for his removal. Of quite another type was a former professor of Latin, an ex-military commissar, who possessed culture, charm, and a prodigious thirst. Though generally ignored by local officials, he clung precariously to his prerogatives, but in his mellow moments confided to the Americans that the business of spying on such agreeable young men was exceedingly distasteful to one of his character and attainments. A semi-military man provided a different variety of Plenipotentiary representative. He was, he announced, first, a member of the Communist Party, second, a general of the Red Army, and third, an official in the government relief organization. His inability to read or write did not seriously handicap the general, for words gushed from him like water under pressure from a hydrant. The general, however, did not last long, and was followed by five others of assorted types in seven months. Changes in representatives were infrequent in the important districts, but one achieved the record of having six duly authorized sub-Plenipotentiaries at the same time, each busily engaged in trying to displace the others. The American who was inundated by this flood of official helpers finally, in desperation, engaged the strongest, most ferocious appearing Cossack he could find to stand guard at his door and hold back the tide of Plenipotentiaries whose surging in and out prevented any attention being given to relief.

#### THE SEAT OF POWER

During the hard days of the first half year, the A.R.A. usually threw the blame for the nagging, nerve-racking interference with their work on the shoulders of Eiduk and his men.

No doubt they deserved much of the blame, but the fact remains that they did not appoint themselves. The ultimate responsibility for Eiduk, for the disruptive policies of his office, for the persistent efforts to break or to emasculate the Riga Agreement, and for the continued threat to the continuity of relief on which thousands of lives hung, rested with the junta of the Communist Party which ruled Russia. But this needs explanation. The intelligent Communists had given up the hope of an immediate world revolution; their internal policy represented by the N.E.P. tended towards capitalism; and their foreign policy was distinctly directed towards accommodation with bourgeois governments against which Trotzky had once declared the Soviets would never make war and never make peace. Why in view of this policy of sweet reasonableness should the Communists jeopardize the success of their new tactics by holding so lightly to the agreement they had with the first considerable enterprise that attempted to work with them? The obvious answer of confirmed anti-Communists, that the Bolsheviks were incapable of honesty, or that the Communists wanted foreign aid and to get it would make any kind of an agreement with no intention of keeping it, will not do. In the first place the Communists never carried the policy of repudiation beyond a certain point and in the second place, there were undoubtedly many members of the Government sincerely opposed to this double dealing and earnestly desirous, from one motive or another, of faithful adherence to their undertakings. The explanation lies first, in the peculiar methods by which Russia was ruled at this time, and second, in the composition of the Party which exercised the supreme power.

Theoretically political power was in the hands of the "toiling masses"—a conveniently vague classification. But of the toiling masses only the proletarians, according to Communist doctrine, were sufficiently intelligent and class conscious to direct the course of revolution. Even the proletariat had its limitations and thus to the Communist Party, numbering half a million, less than one per cent of the population, the organized disciplined vanguard, fell the responsibilities of government. The stupendous bureaucracy that came into being as

an accompaniment of the socialization measures of the first two years of revolution was manned as far as possible by members of the Party, but as there were only about half a million professing Communists, unbelievers had to be employed in the administrative machine. In spite of this dilution, the bureaucracy remained fundamentally a Party affair through placing reliable Communists in all important positions, or by supervision and espionage as in the army and in industry, where non-party experts were indispensable. The rank and file of the Party constituted, therefore, a specially privileged class of officeholders responsible not to the electorate (i.e., the toiling masses), not to the proletariat, not to the government as such, but to the Party leadership. Party leadership theoretically lay with the Central Committee of the Party; actually it resided with the Political Bureau, consisting of five members of the Central Committee. The Political Bureau was to the real Government of Russia what the cow with the crumpled horn was to the house that Jack built:

"This is the cow with the crumpled horn  
That tossed the dog  
That worried the cat  
That killed the rat  
That ate the malt  
That lay in the house that Jack built."

This of course does not accord with the Soviet constitution which provided that political power should be exercised by the gubernia soviets, the All Russian Congress of Soviets and the All Russian Central Executive Committee elected by the latter. But these bodies existed merely to preserve the fiction that the toiling masses were participating in the government. By the basis of representation which they established and by terror, the Communists controlled the elections, and, to make assurance doubly sure, each Soviet congress was preceded by a Party congress and each Party congress by a Central Committee conference, so that the function of the elected bodies of soviets was to debate tamely and then approve the measures that had already been debated and decided by the Party chiefs.

Wholly aside from the merits of this system of government



under the conditions then existing, it seriously complicated the problems of an organization like the A.R.A. which, though it had received guarantees from the Soviet Government, was regarded with suspicion by an influential, though not necessarily predominant, section of the Party. For the Communist bureaucrats, upon whose coöperation so much depended, the interests of the Party prevailed over the interests of those for whom the relief work was begun; and Party leaders lost no time in making it clear that they regarded with suspicion the motives of the foreigners, and expected the faithful to act accordingly. Within a few days after the arrival of the A.R.A. in Moscow, Trotzky made a speech in which he declared that America, the citadel of capitalism, had always opposed the revolution and that now it sought to whiten its soiled hands with flour and milk. He warned against taking seriously the humanitarian professions of the bourgeois organizations and proclaimed the intention of his government to watch the A.R.A. suspiciously and ceaselessly and so to prevent the use of relief as a mask for a political assault on the Soviet power or as the beginning of imperialist exploitation of Russia.

Equally outspoken, and doubtless a more accurate statement of the Party's considered position, is a pamphlet entitled, "Famine and the International Situation," distributed in 1921 to Communist workers by the Central Committee of the Party. Paragraph 4 of the pamphlet summarizes the doubts that assailed the minds of the theorists, who from their watchtower in the Kremlin surveyed the world:

"The famine, as has been said, is the thing that set the question in motion. But at the same time the famine itself excites the hope in some militaristic groups for the fall of the Soviet régime. From this standpoint we can see in the orientation of the world bourgeoisie two opposite manifestations: From one side a clear development and strengthening of tendencies toward commercial agreements and from the other side a new outbreak of the interventionist frame of mind. This brings in its turn a new wave of confusion, and some of the capitalistic groups are hesitating as to the purpose for which they should use the organizations of relief: whether to approach or to upset."

That other organizations as well as the A.R.A. were regarded with suspicion appears in paragraph 6:

"Pure philanthropic assistance from the American or European bourgeois classes can have in the nature of things only very limited scope, and among American and English Quakers the pure philanthropists form only a small minority. It would be too foolish to think that philanthropic assistance can be given in exchange for political concessions. Not a single serious American Quaker should think that in exchange for beans and condensed milk, Russia will give up her Soviet birthright. On this foundation there can be no parley. But if the interventionists try to use relief organizations to cover counter-revolution they will find an organization which has proved its strength before and has no intention of weakening in the future."

Paragraph 9 refers specifically to the A.R.A.:

"In what measure there is even now behind the relief organization of the American Minister, Hoover, a definite striving to renew economic relations with Russia, in what measure through this organization the most irreconcilable interventionists are undertaking to act, and in what measure the efforts of the one are combined with the intrigues of the other, all these only experience will show. On our side are required, first the strong fulfillment of our agreements and second, tireless watchfulness in the center and in the provinces. In Hungary one of the agents of this same Hoover took, according to his own printed story, an active part in the overthrow of the Soviet power. Naturally the organs of the Soviet régime and the Communist Party will beforehand remove every possibility from these and other adventurers of telling in the future how they took part in the overthrow of a Russian Government."

Perhaps it was possible for the Communists of the Political Bureau and of the Central Committee to maintain that fine balance between "strong fulfillment of our agreements" and "tireless watchfulness," but it proved far beyond the range of a majority of the lesser lights with whom the A.R.A. had principally to deal. Moreover, even among the leaders there were differences of opinion of sufficient importance to preclude a

consistently friendly policy towards the A.R.A. From Brest-Litovsk, when Bukharin and others of the theoretical, extremist wing contemplated arresting Lenin and setting up a pure, well-starched government that would concede nothing to the Germans or any one else, there was a serious division which continually threatened to split the unity of leadership. After their victory in the ratification of the Brest Treaty, Lenin and his followers, who stood for accommodation and adaptation, were defeated by their strait-laced opponents and three disastrous years of militant Communism followed. The New Economic Policy and a more amenable foreign policy signified a victory for Lenin's Right Wing faction. But the Left Wing was not routed; it continued to view with alarm and to oppose the weak-kneed surrender of its colleagues. The Left Communists were still strong enough in 1920 to prevent a relief agreement between the A.R.A. and the Soviet Government, such as was drawn up in 1921. Overruled on the latter occasion, they were not convinced, and hence they continued to oppose what they had been unable to prevent. It is reasonable to assume that as a concession to these influential opponents of the Riga Agreement, the Central Committee of the Party gave its consent to the formation of Eiduk's espionage organization, and further placed no restrictions on the press and platform campaign of impugning the motives of all foreign relief which did not come from Communist societies or was not virtually turned over to the Government for distribution.

The clamor of abuse and misrepresentation in party propaganda was readily echoed by many party workers whose sole political stock in trade was the iniquity of all non-Communists. By no means all party men indulged in this activity. Many, especially those who remained in the communities in which they were born, were sincerely, intelligently devoted to the interests of their neighbors and friends, and, therefore, coöperated wholeheartedly with foreign relief efforts. Such Communists were especially numerous in the districts inhabited by non-Russian races, such as the Tartars, the Bashkirs, the Kirghiz, and the Kalmucks. But there were other types: the arrivistes—nimble, quick-witted fellows who had leapt aboard the Communist band wagon as it lurched on towards security



and who clung on, in spite of the efforts of the Party to rid itself of them, making the most of their opportunities. For such as these the vast operations of the A.R.A. were just another opportunity. They sought to control the organization and distribution, not for the glory of Communism, but for more personal ends.

More honorable than the arrivistes, but more troublesome, because they were more numerous and of greater influence, were the veteran revolutionists, the uninspired, faithful fanatics—the burden bearers of the Party. A life spent in agitation and intrigue or in Siberian mines, a narrow-minded devotion to revolutionary dogma and the catchwords of revolution, heads filled (to use Lenin's phrase) with extracts from little pamphlets, rendered these, who had been useful in the days of upheaval and civil strife, utterly useless in the new phase of reconstruction which began with the end of the Polish war and the adoption of the N.E.P. They were like those on the tail end of the line in the game of "snap-the-whip." The effect of the changes of direction of the leaders passes down the line slowly, but with increasing violence until it strikes those at the end with such force that some lose their grip entirely, some are thrown from their feet, there is general confusion all around, and the tail end of the line has to be reformed. The inauguration of the N.E.P. in the spring of 1921 represented not a mild change of direction, but a sharp reversal, the tumultuous effects of which began to be felt at the tail end of the Party six or eight months later, just as the A.R.A. began its relief campaign. It required months of disappointing experience, of bitterness and discouragement, before the new line could form in accordance with the new policy. Until then the A.R.A. fought to overcome not only the obstacles of nature, but the determined opposition of a hostile and powerful faction.

One does not wish to imply that the Americans were always right, that they were never tactless, that they made no mistakes. They were young, able, energetic, and honest, and under heavy responsibilities and a continuous physical and nervous strain they developed both in administrative capacity and in the ability to understand the people for whom and with whom they worked. They were not supermen, but such mis-

takes as they made were errors of judgment, rather than the misuse of power or the violation of the basic principle of the A.R.A. of service to those who were in need without regard to race, religion, or political belief. The application of this principle was by no means facilitated by the consistent attitude of a great many members of the Communist Party and its official press of belittling the work of the Americans, of impugning their motives, and of treating as an enemy the organization which was administering the greatest volume of aid to the Russian people. Regardless of how this attitude may be explained by revolutionary psychology or by the limitations of individual Communists, it was a formidable obstacle which threatened to block the flow of relief. Had this obstacle not been surmounted, the extent of the disaster would have been measured with the lives of the thousands whose hold on life depended on the steady stream of American food.

## CHAPTER VI

### FUNDS, FOOD, AND SHIPS

THE first investigations made on the ground established beyond any doubt that the Russian famine of 1921 was vastly more than a catastrophe from natural causes affecting a broad, productive territory. Russia was like a tired fighter, weak from many wounds, dazed, groggy, and dispirited, who has just felt the heavy impact of another shattering blow.

These early surveys clarified, though they did not simplify, the problem of relief, the broad outlines of which were these:

- (1.) The food production of Russia in 1921 was less than half of what it had been in the same territory in 1913. All Russia was hungry and in vast areas there was acute famine.
- (2.) The regions of drought—the famine regions—embraced a great part of the “black earth,” the most fertile and hence the most densely populated rural sections of Russia. The Volga famine districts covered an area of between 700,000 and 800,000 square miles with a population of over 25,000,000, and the southern Ukraine (subsequently officially recognized as famine stricken)<sup>1</sup> added another 85,000 square miles with 10,000,000 population.<sup>2</sup>
- (3.) The flood of refugees from country to town threatened (with famine deaths) to deprive the producing land of its man power, and to overwhelm the cities with disease and death.
- (4.) The Russians could not effectively help themselves. The industrial centers in non-famine districts were in des-

<sup>1</sup> Chapter XI.

<sup>2</sup> At the time of the first A.R.A. investigations, the population of the Volga famine area was estimated at 15,000,000 to 18,000,000. As time went on, the extent of the catastrophe was more fully realized and new areas were recognized by the A.R.A. and the Soviet Government as famine stricken. See *Food Map of Russia, 1921*, p. 50. The deterioration of production and other economic factors in the situation are discussed more fully in Chapter XXI.



perate straits; transport was demoralized; distribution machinery chaotic; private initiative destroyed by terror or suffering. Without foreign aid, substantial and prompt, it was likely that fifteen or twenty million people must die from hunger, disease, or exposure.

Externally the problem was finance. Where were the needed funds to come from? From Europe? Half Europe was still unable to support its own relief problems and the other half, which stood shakily on its feet, had shown at the conferences at Geneva, Paris, and Brussels that it could not promise help on the scale required.

There remained America. The A.R.A. had \$5,000,000—enough to finance its program for feeding a million or a million and a quarter children and invalids. Twelve or fifteen times this amount was needed. This matter of finance was fundamental. Without these funds there could be no effective relief. How were they to be secured? That was the problem which faced Hoover, and his solution of it was the most important factor in the success of the enterprise of Russian relief.

This mobilization of over \$60,000,000 was, under the conditions that existed, one of the most difficult, though not the most spectacular, of the A.R.A.'s activities.<sup>3</sup> It amounted to more than giving another shake to the tree of generosity and picking up the required number of ripe millions littering the ground. In fact the state of affairs was such that many doubted the possibility of ever raising in this country the millions which the Russian catastrophe demanded. There were ten chances to one that an appeal to help Russia might result not in funds, but in a violent reaction against "foreign charity" in general and a new flare-up of hostility against Russia in particular. The broadly held faith in the Chairman of the A.R.A. as a leader in such enterprises, no less than the fact that the organization, with the sanction of the United States and the Soviet Government, was already on the ground, im-

<sup>3</sup> "There was no country in the world where there was greater loathing of Bolshevism than in the United States," wrote Sir Philip Gibbs. "It was to the majority of American citizens, as it is still, the Unspeakable Thing. . . . So much the more wonderful then is the charity of those people who, with that enormous prejudice in their minds, heard the voice of charity." *Ten Years After*, 100-101. New York, 1925.

posed upon Hoover and his associates the responsibility of deciding how the major appeal to our people should be made. Before recounting what that decision was and how it was carried out, it is well to look at some of the aspects of the American scene at this time.

### THE AMERICAN BACKGROUND

First, the economic aspect. The stimulus of the war boom carried through the year 1919, but half way through 1920 Americans began to feel those inward griping pains of deflation that always follow an overindulgence of prosperity. America had expanded production to meet the needs of Europe during the war. The end of hostilities and the subsequent collapse of the European market demonstrated with painful emphasis that a quart would not go in a pint measure. The immediate manifestations of the cruel process of readjustment were an increase of unemployment, insolvencies, and the acute distress of the agricultural community. By September, 1921, the number of unemployed was variously estimated from 3,500,000 to 5,500,000.<sup>4</sup> Mercantile and industrial insolvencies were 19,652 in 1921, as compared with 6,451 in 1919. The Department of Agriculture estimated that the market value of the 1921 crop to the farmers was \$8,000,000,000 below the value of the 1919 crop, and \$3,400,000,000 below the 1920 crop.<sup>5</sup> The winter of 1921-22 promised to bring despair, hunger, and cold to many thousands in America, for the unemployed, who had gone through the preceding winter on their savings, faced the coming months without resources.

The care of these destitute was obviously the first duty of the American people, and this was widely recognized and reflected in the press. During the relief negotiations with the Soviet Government—even before any suggestion had been made that there might be a great appeal for funds—the press of the country discussed the probability of a drive. In these discussions two points stood out. The first was that the

<sup>4</sup> *Report of the President's Conference on Unemployment*, 37. Washington, 1921.

<sup>5</sup> The National City Bank of New York, *Economic Conditions, Governmental Finance, United States Securities*. January, 1922.

country had responded to a great many drives, that it had done its duty to Europe, and that under the circumstances of the moment when business, labor, and agriculture were becoming panicky before the spectre of hard times, an appeal for funds would certainly fail and would deserve to. The second point was the perennially popular declaration that charity begins at home. One editor spoke the thought in thousands of minds when he wrote:

"If there are going to be any drives, let them be for funds to feed, clothe, and shelter several million perfectly good Americans who are going to have pretty tough sledding during the coming winter unless all signs fail."<sup>6</sup>

No less important than this economic situation, with all its implications, was the hostility to all things Russian which was an article of faith in the minds of most good Americans. Russia was the country that had deserted the Allies at a critical time in the war. Russian and Bolshevik were terms that were rapidly acquiring the same connotation. The Bolsheviks were not merely scoundrels who had sold their country and betrayed its allies for German gold, they were bandits, gunmen, and worse, for they attacked property, religion, and the sanctity of the home. Russian atrocities were now as dear to the sensationalists of press and platform as German atrocities had been a few years before. Finally, this anti-Russian current had been quickened by the extraordinary antics of American officials in the anti-red crusade of the winter 1920-21.<sup>7</sup> Though this performance, in perspective, is as grotesque as the terror of an elephant at the sight of a mouse, it did terrify many timid minds with the thought of the horrors of a revolution in America, planned, financed, and directed by Russian agitators, and the fact is that hostility against Russia,

<sup>6</sup> *Toledo News Bee*, August 23, 1921.

<sup>7</sup> Among the happenings which left their mark on the public mind were the bomb outrages of May and June, 1919; the "Red Crusade" led by Attorney General Palmer, and the Lusk Committee (New York), in November and December, 1919; the deportations in the "Soviet Ark" at the end of December, 1919; the Bolshevik invasion of Poland in the summer of 1920; the Wall Street explosion in September, 1920; the expulsion of Martens, the Soviet representative, in January, 1921; the deportation of more Reds in February, 1921. L. F. Post, *The Deportations Delirium of Nineteen-Twenty*, Chicago, 1923, gives an account of some of these matters.



which made no distinction between peasant and proletarian, Bolshevik and Menshevik, was real, and a vast number of Americans felt as Horace Greeley did when asked to give some money to save a thousand fellow citizens from hell: "I won't give you a cent," said Greeley, "there don't half enough go there now."

These obstacles, business depression and unemployment and hostility to all things Russian, however, were not insurmountable. Measures were already in motion which took the sting out of the argument that charity begins at home. To the urging of the American Friends Service Committee that he should take the lead in a public drive for Russian Relief, Hoover replied that we must first organize relief for our own distress, and that having been done, America would respond to an appeal for Russia. He proposed to attack the unemployment situation at home through government leadership. He laid his proposal before President Harding in a letter on August 20, 1921, in which he suggested the calling of a "presidential commission of men representative of all sections, predominantly those who can influence the action of employing forces and who can influence public opinion with a view to proper determination of the facts and needs of the [unemployment] situation," and on September 20, President Harding announced Hoover's appointment as chairman of the conference. It assembled September 26 and remained in session until October 4, when it adjourned until October 11 and concluded its general sessions on October 13.<sup>8</sup> This conference achieved important results both in the matter of starting successful measures of emergency relief and of establishing a scientific basis for research and public education in the nature of the problem of unemployment. It succeeded, for the first time in American history, in focusing public opinion on unemployment; it gave the impetus to the formation of municipal relief committees on a nation-wide scale; it influenced industry to assume its share of responsibility to the unemployed.

Hostility to all things Russian remained a sufficient obstacle to an appeal for funds, conceived and executed on a large scale. This obstacle, moreover, was magnified rather than

<sup>8</sup> *Report of the President's Conference on Unemployment*, Washington, 1921.

reduced by the more obstreperous friends of the Soviet Government who accompanied their cries for relief measures with demands for political recognition of that régime. Hoover recognized that America would accept the idea of Russian relief only if our people realized, first, that provision was made for our own situation, second, the true situation in all its ghastly horror, third, that those to be helped were as innocent of sinister designs against American institutions as they were of the causes of their present plight; and fourth, that any American gifts would not be controlled and perhaps misused by the Bolsheviks who were so generally distrusted. The Riga Agreement had already helped to clear up these points. Its terms provided for strict American control.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, in the negotiations at Riga, the A.R.A. on Hoover's instructions had insisted that representatives of the American newspapers and press associations be admitted to Russia in order that the world might know the extent of the disaster. This was agreed to by the Soviet Government, which, since the withdrawal of the foreign diplomatic representatives, had admitted only those press representatives who were known to look upon the Communist régime with a sympathetic eye.

In clarifying the Russian situation to the American people the A.R.A. followed its established policy of gathering every possible bit of specific and reliable information in order to have a definite program to present. Therefore, in addition to the surveys of the A.R.A. field workers and of experts attached to the Russian Unit, Hoover asked James P. Goodrich, former Governor of Indiana, and Dr. Vernon Kellogg, Secretary of the National Research Council and an old relief worker in the Commission for Relief in Belgium and the A.R.A., to go to Russia, make independent surveys and return to America as soon as possible with such information as they had been able to gather from personal observation, from the A.R.A.

<sup>9</sup> It is significant that most radicals and some liberals criticized the Riga Agreement as unnecessarily strict, quite oblivious of the fact that a majority of those in a position to contribute influence or large gifts were less trustful of the Bolsheviks and would aid the project only under guarantees such as the Riga Agreement established.

workers, and from the Soviet Government.<sup>10</sup> The purpose of this will appear later.

Goodrich and Kellogg confirmed the preliminary A.R.A. reports. Particularly, they emphasized the urgency of the situation, for it was clear that unless the food and seed supplies reached the famine villages in time for the spring sowing, this help would be too late to prevent a new, more appalling wave of migration and to insure the crop on which Russia depended for escape from the worse conditions of another famine.

This vital consideration of time was one reason for abandoning the project of a "national collection" as a method of mobilizing funds. The "collection" of the European Relief Council under Hoover's chairmanship had secured by February, 1921, nearly \$30,000,000. The very success of this campaign militated against a like success a few months later under less favorable conditions. The E.R.C. campaign, after some weeks of preliminary preparation, had run through three months. The Russian project called for greater speed. Even if a new drive were to succeed, which was doubtful, monies in the measure necessary would come too late to be effective.

#### TWENTY MILLION DOLLARS FROM CONGRESS

The alternative to a national drive was to get an appropriation by the Congress. No one in Washington at the time this project was first mooted believed that an appropriation for any such purpose could be secured. The Republican Party was pledged to economy, and on the strength of that pledge the administration was opposing legislation for a soldiers' bonus. Unemployment had by no means been liquidated, and although the President's Conference had improved the situation, there was still agitation for Government help which in one way or another would take the form of subventions from the Treasury. More important still, from the political point of view, was the plight of the farmers. They were obliged to sell their products at ruinously low prices and at the same time

<sup>10</sup> Dr. Kellogg, then in Europe, went immediately to Russia, arriving there on September 19. He left for the United States on October 3. Mr. Goodrich reached Russia on October 3 and left there on November 14, 1921.



to buy what they needed at high prices. The farmers cried aloud in anguish, and wrote letters to their Congressmen demanding that they do something to relieve them, and at once. Would the Administration recommend and would the Congress approve the expenditure of public money for the relief of people in Russia, while refusing to spend it for the relief of their own constituents?

Set off against these chances of failure, the proposal to seek a government appropriation had many things in its favor. In the first place, a Congressional appropriation would become immediately available and would thus insure that the supplies purchased by it would arrive in Russia in time to do the most good. If such an appropriation could be put through, it would not conflict with the appeals of other relief societies, and, if the appropriation could be put through at all, it could be done relatively quickly, thereby avoiding the danger of a long-winded political controversy on the merits of Communism, which was not at issue. There was, however, another reason of a totally different character for seeking a Congressional appropriation. For Hoover was fully awake to America's as well as Russia's problem and saw even more in this method than the attaining of an appropriation for feeding Russians. From his analysis of the economic situation, he believed that if the Congress would authorize for Russian relief the use of the funds which remained in the hands of the United States Grain Corporation, amounting to about \$20,000,000, and if these funds were used to buy food supplies from the American farmer, the result would be beneficial not only to the Russians, but to American farmers and laborers as well. He estimated that purchases to this amount, while not in themselves a striking total, would, particularly in corn where the greatest trouble lay, sweep the market of distress, liquidate sales, and give the farmers a chance. Moreover, these purchases would convince prospective buyers—especially foreign buyers who had been holding off—that the period of liquidation was over. They would resume purchasing, causing an increase in farm values all along the line. This increase in turn would be reflected in increased purchasing of manufactured articles by the farmers, which would improve the industrial situation and so

contribute to the solution of the unemployment problem. The Government appropriation would thus indirectly put an end to the tragic anomaly of the farmers of one part of the world using food grains for fuel, while the farmers of another part of the world were starving. And "charity," both abroad and at home, would be served.

Hoover took his proposal of a Government appropriation to President Harding, who had from the first given his support to the A.R.A. relief program, and who recognized the soundness of Hoover's plan. The President voiced his support of the proposal by recommending in his message to Congress, December 6, 1921, that Congress make "the appropriation necessary to supply the American Relief Administration with 10,000,000 bushels of corn and 1,000,000 bushels of seed grains not alone to halt the wave of death through starvation, but to enable spring planting in areas where the seed grains have been exhausted temporarily to stem starvation."<sup>11</sup> On December 10 Mr. Fordney introduced a bill (H.R. 9549) "for the relief of the suffering people of Russia through the American Relief Administration" which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs. This bill provided for an appropriation of \$10,000,000 which was regarded as sufficient to cover the recommendations of the President in his address before Congress. The House Committee on Foreign Affairs held hearings on the bill on December 13 and 14, at which Hoover, Goodrich, and Kellogg appeared. The wisdom of having had special investigations by Goodrich and Kellogg was now evident. Hoover was able to bring before the Congressional committee, men whose testimony would have great weight, for they were not only highly competent investigators, but—more important still—they had observed conditions with their own eyes. In the course of his testimony, in which he described conditions as he had found them during his investigation, Governor Goodrich stated that an area with a population of about 18,000,000 people was affected by famine. He pointed out that the proposed appropriation of \$10,000,000 would probably not be enough to meet the situation and recommended that instead of 10,000,000 bushels of corn and 1,000,000 bushels of seed

<sup>11</sup> *Congressional Record*, Vol. 62, pt. 1, pp. 36-39.



Movements of Supplies, A. R. A., 1921-1923.



grain, these amounts be increased to 20,000,000 bushels of corn and 5,000,000 bushels of seed. This, he estimated, would require an appropriation of approximately \$20,000,000. Dr. Kellogg made a like recommendation. Hoover, who followed Dr. Kellogg, estimated that with the full coöperation of the Russian railways it would be possible to transport an average of 100,000 tons a month, and that if the funds were made available within a short time there would be a period of about six months during which the transportation of supplies could be carried out. For all practical purposes, therefore, the proposed relief would be limited to from 20,000,000 to 22,000,000 bushels, regardless of the requirements of the famine situation. In addition to the corn and seed, Hoover urged that the Congress authorize the expenditure of part of the appropriation for preserved milk for children. Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor, Ralph Snyder, representing the American Farm Bureau Federation, Carl S. Vrooman, former Assistant Secretary of the Department of Agriculture, also representing the agricultural interests, appeared before the Committee and supported the measure for Russian relief.<sup>12</sup> President Harding approved the change in the bill raising the appropriation from \$10,000,000 to \$20,000,000, and the House Foreign Affairs Committee on December 14 favorably reported the bill to the House. The bill, as introduced, was as follows:

"That the President is hereby authorized through such agency or agencies as he may designate to purchase, transport, and distribute corn, seed grain, and preserved milk for the relief of the distressed and starving people of Russia and for spring planting in areas where seed grains have been exhausted. The President is authorized to expend or cause to be expended out of the funds of the United States Grain Corporation a sum not exceeding \$20,000,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> *Russia Relief. Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 67th Congress, 2nd Session on H. R. 9549 and H. R. 9548.* Washington, 1921.

<sup>13</sup> At the hearings before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Hoover had suggested that since the A.R.A. was a private organization, specific reference

The House debated this bill on December 17. The principal opposition was based on the argument that while thousands of Americans were in want, the Congress was not justified in appropriating large sums of money for foreign relief. There were also lengthy arguments to prove that such an appropriation would be unconstitutional.<sup>14</sup> Three amendments were placed on the bill, one requesting the President to give an accounting of the monies spent by December 31, 1922; another requiring that the food supplies should be transported either in Shipping Board or other American vessels; and the third, that the supplies should be purchased in the United States. Attempts were made to add other amendments. One of these was designed to restrict the distribution of the supplies to the Volga Valley. This amendment, though defeated, caused one member of the House to announce that it confirmed his suspicion that an attempt was being made "to do something in an indirect way with a gang of freebooters." Another amendment was proposed to have the relief distributed to all parts of Russia according to pre-war boundaries, thus including the Baltic and Transcaucasian Republics. Another proposed amendment reduced the appropriation to \$10,000,000, while another provided that the whole \$20,000,000 should be used for the relief of distress among the people of the United States, instead of among the people of Russia. The bill finally passed the House with a vote of 181 yeas, 71 noes and 175 not voting.

The same objections to the bill appeared in the debates in the Senate on December 20. Here again the constitutionality of the measure was attacked, an attempt was made to cut the appropriation in half, and various amendments were proposed. One of these amendments appropriated a half million dollars for the hospitalization of ex-service men, and another provided \$100,000 for the relief of unemployment. One senator an-

to it as the distributing agency should be omitted from the bill and that this matter be left to the discretion of the President.

<sup>14</sup>*Congressional Record*, Vol. 62, pt. 1, pp. 428, 452, 455; pt. 13, p. 13268. During the Russian famine of 1891 the Congress was asked to appropriate \$100,000 for relief. The proposal was talked to death. The constitutional argument was also used at that time. There were, however, precedents; for example in 1812, the Congress appropriated money to load five ships with food for the relief of victims of the Caracas earthquake.

nounced that since the bill would have no effect whatever on economic conditions in the United States, the money might just as well be spent for bringing Russians to America in order to educate them. Another declared that the Russians had never asked for relief anyway, and clinched his argument by a bitter personal attack on Hoover. The whole opposition to the bill may be illustrated by two quotations. One senator said that it was time for "Uncle Sam to stop being Santa Claus to the whole world." Another, with great unction . . . "but are we going to say when the Christmas bells are ringing that we have \$20,000,000 for Russia, but not a penny to aid the American working man in securing a position; that we have money for Russia, but that the American soldier, who carried our stainless banner to new glory, may die a death of neglect because, forsooth, bureaucracy says the soldier is already taken care of and that a bureaucracy must never be questioned."<sup>15</sup>

The bill was passed without roll-call and was then taken up in conference with the House. The Senate conferees agreed to the elimination of the Senate amendments, and the Bill was reported back to the Senate. The House immediately agreed to the conference report. An attempt was made by one senator to block the passage of the bill before the Christmas holidays. This, however, was unsuccessful and the conference report on the bill was adopted by the Senate on December 22. President Harding immediately signed the bill, and on December 24, at Hoover's request issued an executive order directing how its provisions should be carried out.

The executive order created a commission known as the Purchasing Commission for Russian Relief, consisting of the following members: The Secretary of Commerce (Herbert Hoover), James P. Goodrich of Indiana, Edward M. Fleisch of Missouri, Vice President and Treasurer of the United States Grain Corporation, Edgar Rickard of New York, Director General of the A.R.A., and Don Livingston, ex-Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture of the State of South Dakota. The Commission was charged with the purchase, transport, and delivery of the commodities authorized in the act,

<sup>15</sup> *Congressional Record*, Vol. 62, pt. 1, pp. 565-6, 574, 608, 674.



and its operations began immediately. The United States Grain Corporation was designated as the fiscal agency of the Commission and authorized to pay out of its available funds, bills and all obligations incurred by the Commission to the total amount of \$20,000,000, so long as these expenditures did not exceed that sum. The President designated the American Relief Administration as the agency to accept and distribute in Russia, according to its discretion, such commodities as were purchased and turned over to it by the Purchasing Commission.<sup>16</sup>

The appropriation of \$20,000,000 was one of the most important steps in the Russian relief program. Had this appropriation failed to pass and had the A.R.A. been obliged to rely upon such contributions as it could secure from private sources, there is no doubt but that the whole relief operation would have been vastly less effective.<sup>17</sup>

#### FOUR MILLION DOLLARS FOR MEDICAL RELIEF

The preliminary surveys in Russia, as has been noted, indicated that the need of medicines and medical equipment was second only to the need of food. Hospitals and institutions were bare not only of general supplies, such as beds, blankets, and clothing, but of such essentials as anesthetics, instruments, and dressings. Epidemics raged unchecked and disease incident to the famine spread with the relentlessness of a rising tide. The A.R.A. in its previous operations had never carried out a medical program, but in Russia there was no other organization in a position to assume the responsibility for this very necessary work. The funds at the disposal of the A.R.A. were especially earmarked for children's relief, or, as in the case of the Congressional Appropriation of \$20,000,000, restricted by legislation to the purchase of foodstuffs. The

<sup>16</sup> The texts of the bill and President Harding's Executive Order will be found in Appendix A, Doc. VI, VII.

<sup>17</sup> The \$20,000,000 appropriation, which permitted the A.R.A. to extend relief to adults, necessitated a new agreement with the Soviet Government. This agreement, which was signed in London, December 30, 1921, by Walter Lyman Brown and Leonid Krassin, extended the provisions of the Riga Agreement to cover the expansion of the program. The text of this agreement will be found in Appendix A, Doc. VIII.

American Red Cross had, however, made an agreement with the A.R.A., on September 2, 1921, respecting a medical program, undertaking to furnish support in supplies and funds to the extent of \$3,000,000. This sum was later increased to \$3,600,000.<sup>18</sup>

The contribution of the American Red Cross, generous though it was, could not by any means meet the needs in Russia. In looking about for further support for the medical work, Hoover learned that in the War Department there were very considerable quantities of medical and hospital supplies that had been accumulated during the war, but had since been declared a surplus and were being held in storage at considerable expense, awaiting disposal. Among these surplus supplies were many which would do inestimable good in Russia. Hoover, therefore, wrote on October 15, 1921, to Mr. Julius Kahn, Chairman of the House Committee on Military Affairs, and expressed the hope that "Congress might authorize the Secretary of War to donate to these [relief] associations such of the used clothing, surplus medical and food supplies as cannot be advantageously used by the Army, or as cannot be readily disposed of for cash." This letter, subsequently made public, met with general approval. On November 2, Mr. Kahn introduced in the House a joint resolution<sup>19</sup> to authorize the Secretary of War to donate supplies from the surplus war stocks of the United States Army in an amount not to exceed \$4,000,000 cost value, to be turned over to Hoover as head of the A.R.A. The resolution was referred to the Committee on Military Affairs and hearings were held. Hoover and Kellogg appeared, described the conditions existing, and explained the methods by which American relief was being distributed and the manner in which any supplies that were appropriated would be applied. Major General M. W.

<sup>18</sup> For the details of the American Relief Administration-American Red Cross agreement see Appendix A, Doc. III.

<sup>19</sup> "Joint Resolution authorizing the Secretary of War to turn over to Herbert Hoover, Secretary of Commerce, certain medical and hospital supplies for distribution to children of the Volga basin and Russian Armenia (H. J. Res. 218)." A bill (H. R. 12701) had previously been introduced in the House, September 18, by Mr. Volstead, "for the distribution of certain military supplies to the distressed and starving people of Russia." This bill had provided that the supplies should not exceed \$5,000,000 in value. A somewhat similar bill had been introduced in the Senate (S. J. 104) on August 19, 1921.

Ireland, Surgeon-General of the Army, also appeared before the Committee and stated that among the supplies of the War Department declared surplus those which would be of value in Russia amounted roughly to \$1,500,000 in medicines, \$1,500,000 in dressings, \$500,000 in hospital supplies, and an almost unlimited amount of surgical instruments.

Action on this project for medical relief followed in the Senate on November 14, when Senator Wadsworth introduced a bill (S. 52708) similar to that which had been introduced in the House except that no limit was placed on the value of the supplies to be turned over by the Secretary of War, and the A.R.A. was designated as the agency to whom the supplies were to be conveyed. This bill, moreover, provided that all expenses of handling, packing, shipping, etc., were to be paid by the A.R.A. The bill was referred to the Committee on Military Affairs and on the first day of the new session of Congress, December 6, was passed over some opposition by the Senate. It then went to the House where it was sent to the Military Affairs Committee from which it was reported on December 12.

In the meantime, Congress had been asked to appropriate the \$20,000,000 for the purchase of corn and seed grain and this bill held the center of the stage for the next few weeks. In order not to jeopardize the chances of the more important appropriation, the Medical Supplies bill was not brought forward again until the middle of January, when the echoes of the debates on the other bill had died down. At that time, a substitute bill, differing in some particulars from that passed by the Senate, was put to the House. In the new bill no specific organization or person was named, but the President was authorized to turn the supplies over to "American relief organizations selected by him." The supplies, moreover, were to come not only from the War Department but from other departments of the Government, such as the Navy, the Shipping Board, and the Department of Public Health, which also possessed surplus war supplies. This bill also limited the amount to \$4,000,000 original cost to the United States. It also required that the supplies be delivered and accepted by the designated agency within a period of four months from the date



of the passage of the act. The Senate on January 17 accepted the House substitute bill, which was approved by the President on January 20.<sup>20</sup>

President Harding's Executive Order, issued January 24th, designated the A.R.A. as the relief organization to receive from the War, Navy and Treasury Departments, and the United States Shipping Board, the selected medical supplies, to transport them and distribute them in Russia. The Executive Order authorized the A.R.A. at its discretion to turn over some of these supplies to other relief organizations.<sup>21</sup>

#### TWELVE MILLION FROM THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

The third large appropriation, which became available for relief purposes within a few days of the \$20,000,000 appropriation, was from the Soviet Government. As in the case of both Congressional appropriations, Hoover supplied the initiative—the insistence that Russia must do her part.

As early as August 26, 1921, six days after the agreement was signed with the Soviet authorities, Hoover telegraphed to Carroll, who was in charge of the first A.R.A. relief party in Russia, that,

“We are informed Soviet authorities have several million dollars in gold, platinum, etc.; that there is a surplus of some 10,000,000 bushels of grain in Bulgaria, Rumania and Serbia which they could secure immediate delivery. If they cannot obtain upon reasonable terms, A.R.A. will purchase and ship from United States for delivery to their account absolutely at cost without any agency or profit charges, taking payment at Stockholm banks.”

Hoover's object in making this move was not only to increase food supplies for Russia, but to cause the Soviet Government to import food to the full extent of its resources, in order that the world, and particularly America, which had been asked to come to the assistance of Russia, should be con-

<sup>20</sup> The text of this bill and the Executive Order will be found in Appendix A, Docs. IX, X.

<sup>21</sup> This clause was inserted in order to permit the A.R.A. to give a part of these supplies to the Near East Relief for distribution in the Caucasus and to the Friends for distribution in Buzuluk.

vinced by a practical demonstration that the Russian authorities themselves were doing everything that they could to meet the situation. Hoover reverted to this matter in a telegram (Sept. 2, 1921) to Colonel Haskell on the occasion of the latter's departure from America to become A.R.A. Director in Russia. In his telegram Mr. Hoover said:

"As you are aware, it is reported here that Soviet Government has still some resources in gold and metals, and it does seem to me fundamental that they should expend these sums at once in the purchase of breadstuffs from abroad. While even this will be insufficient to cover their necessities, they can scarcely expect the rest of the world to make sacrifices until they have exhausted their own resources."

Immediately on receipt of the telegram from Hoover, Carroll took up with Litvinov, of the Soviet Foreign Office, this matter of purchases of grain by the Russian Government in the foreign markets. Litvinov was favorable to the plan, but stated that all foreign purchases were in the hands of the Russian Trade Delegation in London and that negotiations would have to be conducted at that point. Walter Lyman Brown, of the A.R.A., thereupon took up the question with the Russian Trade Delegation, who were apparently favorable to the plan, preferring to make purchases in the Balkans if possible, otherwise, in the United States. The Trade Delegation officials assured Brown that the story that the Soviet Government had valuable supplies of platinum was a myth, but that they did have about \$4,000,000 in gold in various coinages, available for such purchases. The negotiations dragged intermittently through the months of September, October, and November, making slow progress indeed. During a good part of this period Krassin, the Commissar of Foreign Trade and head of the Soviet Delegation in London, was either without authority from Moscow to make definite commitments or was away from London, which necessitated holding matters in suspension. The Trade Delegation finally reached the point of stating that as they had no representative in the Balkans and felt that transportation conditions there would offer great difficulties, they wished the A.R.A. to

make purchases for them, principally of buckwheat, rye, wheat, and millet. Four million dollars was available for this and if the purchases were satisfactory, further funds would be forthcoming. Before undertaking to secure the entry of the Russian gold to America and to make the purchases, the A.R.A. required an understanding from the Soviet Government that the foodstuffs were destined for the famine regions and that the gold was not a part of the Rumanian gold which had been deposited in Russia during the war and against which the Rumanian Government had made claims. On Krassin's return to London in the middle of October, negotiations began to move again. He objected to a direct statement concerning the Rumanian gold as incompatible with the dignity of Russia and as implying the use of stolen gold. A statement to the effect that the gold employed in this transaction was in the possession of the Russian treasury at the beginning of the war was substituted. The only other point at issue was the assurance that the supplies purchased should be used in the Volga Valley, the Trade Delegation taking the position that food imported into other sections of Russia would release other food for the famine region. The A.R.A. accepted Krassin's point of view on these matters and on October 25, Brown was authorized to complete the agreement. Hoover again (October 26) urged the Soviet authorities by cable to agree to the five million dollar food purchase and thus, by showing their intention of themselves doing all possible for their own people, to facilitate the raising of other relief funds in America. At this point Krassin declared himself without the necessary authority to make a definite commitment for his government, so the whole matter hung fire during the month of November and until the middle of December, when Krassin finally told Brown that he was ready to proceed.

By the time Krassin had received authority from his government to close the agreement the campaign for the appropriation of \$20,000,000 by Congress was in full swing. It was obvious that the chances of success for the Congressional appropriation would be greatly enhanced if public announcement could be made that the Soviet Government was importing food for famine relief to the limit of its resources. Hoover asked



Brown to point this out to Krassin and to press for an increase of Soviet purchases from \$4,000,000 to \$10,000,000.<sup>22</sup> Krassin replied that it would be difficult to purchase the full amount at once, and suggested that not less than \$3,000,000 be made available immediately after the agreement was signed, the remainder of the \$10,000,000 to be supplied in monthly installments.<sup>23</sup> An arrangement along these lines was subsequently adopted, the A.R.A. insisting, however, that the full \$10,000,000 worth of food be imported into Russia by the Soviets for the famine region. It did not insist that this full amount come from the United States, but rather that that amount be devoted to the purchase in some quarter of the world for famine relief. An agreement was finally completed and signed on December 30, eight days after the Congressional appropriation had been passed.<sup>24</sup>

A few days after the Soviet gold agreement was signed, Colonel Haskell forwarded from Moscow a statement from Rakovsky, the chairman of the Council of Peoples Commissars of the Ukraine, asking for aid to the Ukraine and requesting the A.R.A. to make food and seed purchases for the Ukrainian Government to the value of 4,000,000 gold roubles (about \$2,000,000). Rakovsky also asked the A.R.A. to arrange a credit of an additional 7,000,000 gold roubles for the same purpose. Brown and Krassin, who had been designated as the agent of the Ukrainian Government, resumed negotiations. Brown declared the willingness of the A.R.A. to do the purchasing requested, but pointed out that being neither a government, nor a banking organization, it could not extend credits.<sup>25</sup> The details of the purchasing arrangement were,

<sup>22</sup> Hoover's telegram to Brown urging the increase which he felt the Soviet Government could and should make said: "Convey to Krassin that American Government appropriation will probably alter entire relation. It cannot be expected that American people will give charity in this volume while Soviet does not strain its every resource."

<sup>23</sup> In agreeing to the proposal to purchase \$10,000,000 worth of grain instead of \$4,000,000, Litvinov requested that the A.R.A. secure permission for the Soviet Government to send an agent to the United States, this agent to be either himself or Mr. Kinchuk, the head of the Coöperatives. Permission was secured for a commercial agent such as Kinchuk to come to the United States to coöperate in the purchasing of supplies. No agent was employed.

<sup>24</sup> The text of this agreement will be found in Appendix A, Doc. XI.

<sup>25</sup> The credit which the Ukrainian Government proposed was to be in the nature of an acknowledged debt by that government to be paid within three to five years.

however, satisfactorily arranged and an agreement with the Ukrainian Government similar to that with the Soviet Government was duly signed on February 1, 1922.<sup>26</sup>

Krassin's signature to the agreement providing for the expenditure of \$10,000,000 for relief purposes was not the last word in the story of the Soviet gold. The gold in the form of bars and various coinages was in Russia. It would not buy seed and other relief supplies until it was out of Russia and its value translated into United States currency. This involved more than the physical handling of the gold. In the first place, permission had to be secured to bring the gold into the United States,—not an altogether easy matter. Second, arrangements had to be made whereby the value of the gold would become at once available for relief purchases, since if the buying and shipping were delayed, the supplies would reach Russia too late to do the maximum good.

Early in September (1921) Hoover took up with the United States Government departments concerned, the matter of permitting the entry of Soviet gold for relief purchases. He immediately encountered strong opposition, for his proposal would constitute a notable departure from the policy of refusing entry to gold of known or suspected Soviet origin.<sup>27</sup> But as the Russian officials did not reach the point of definite commitment until December 30th, Hoover did not have occasion to press the issue until that time. The opposition had by no means disappeared, but on January 6th Hoover urged the matter at a meeting of the cabinet and secured a favorable decision. On the following day the Secretary of the Treasury issued instructions to the United States Assay Office in New York, "in view of the special nature of this case . . . to accept

<sup>26</sup> In March, 1922, a representative of the Crimean Government approached J. N. Brown, the A.R.A. port representative at Theodosia, with the proposition for the purchase of \$5,000,000 worth of seed and grain through the medium of an American bank in Constantinople. Many complications, bearing on the authority of the Crimean Government to make such an arrangement independently of Moscow and the bank's legal disabilities in entering contractual relations with the Crimean Government, delayed the development of this plan. The Crimean authorities finally abandoned it.

<sup>27</sup> There were formidable legal arguments to support this policy. To overcome one of these arguments the A.R.A. had Par. X inserted in the Gold Agreement. "The Soviet Authorities guarantee that the gold used in this transaction has been in the possession of the Russian Treasury since the beginning of the war in August, 1914."

this specific lot of gold when deposited and make settlement therefor in the usual manner."

This important matter being settled, there remained the problem of making the value of the appropriation available to the A.R.A. while the gold traveled from Russia via Stockholm to the United States and passed through the Assay Office. To provide for immediate purchases before the Soviet authorities would be able to deliver the gold to the A.R.A. in Stockholm, Krassin agreed to establish an irrevocable credit of \$3,500,000 in favor of the A.R.A. with the London branch of a New York bank.<sup>28</sup>

This provided for the first lap of the journey, i.e., from Russia to Stockholm. But for the period between the delivery of the gold to the A.R.A. in Stockholm and its arrival in New York, other arrangements had to be made. Therefore, when the first consignment of Russian gold reached Stockholm on January 14,<sup>29</sup> it was turned over to the Skandinaviska Kreditaktiebolaget as representative of the Guaranty Trust Co. of New York, which had agreed to advance to the A.R.A. 95 per cent of the conversion value of the gold as delivered. By these arrangements the A.R.A. was able to buy as fast as the Soviet orders were received, and to deliver the supplies in Russia in time to provide seed for the peasants, to whom nothing remained, to plant the new crops.<sup>30</sup>

#### THE FUNDS SECURED BY ORGANIZATIONS AFFILIATED WITH THE A.R.A.

In addition to the funds and supplies appropriated by the United States and Soviet Governments, other considerable sums became available for Russian relief through a number of organizations more or less closely affiliated with the A.R.A.

<sup>28</sup> This was provided under Par. 7 of the Soviet Gold Agreement. Appendix A, Doc. XI. This credit became available January 6, 1922.

<sup>29</sup> The first gold reached New York on February 7, 1922; the second shipment on February 15, and the final shipment on March 13, 1922. The A.R.A. had been buying for the Soviet account since January 10.

<sup>30</sup> The A.R.A. staff attested to the effective use of this seed. Officially, Yakovenko, Commissar of Agriculture, wrote: "The data at the disposal of the Peoples Commissariat of Agriculture regarding the size of the seeded spring, as well as winter area in 1922, permit the assertion that all seed dispatched to the hunger stricken districts was completely utilized for planting." From a letter to Haskell, November 4, 1922.



Many of these had been members of the European Relief Council, which had conducted the "collection" for Central European relief already referred to. This experience proved anew the vast advantage of coördination. The Russian problem demanded a similar treatment, for here, as in the case of Belgium in 1914, there was strong likelihood of waste, ineffectiveness, and confusion through well meant but uncoördinated efforts. The confusion in the early days of Belgian relief was liquidated only when both belligerents stipulated that the Commission for Relief in Belgium was the only body authorized to handle this relief through enemy lines. Some adaptation of the Belgian procedure was clearly desirable both in respect to raising funds and in the conduct of relations with the Soviet Government in Russia. In regard to the latter, the State Department foresaw the possibility of undesired complications if a number of American committees swarmed into Russia under private arrangements, less explicit than the Riga Agreement.

As a result, President Harding wrote Hoover on August 18 reaffirming his fullest approval of the action taken by the A.R.A., but stating further:

"My particular purpose in addressing this letter to you is to emphasize my wish that the distribution in Russia of all charity arising in the United States should be carried on through the one American organization. It is only through single American representation and administration that we can assure to both American and Russian people the best service in the use of their funds."

On receipt of this letter Hoover sent to all the societies comprising the European Relief Council an invitation to meet in Washington, "to consider a joint arrangement to be undertaken for administration of the relief work in Russia."

The object of this European Relief Council meeting (August 24, 1921) and of the agreement drawn up at that time was to preserve the independence and freedom of action of the participating organizations, in so far as possible, while bringing the whole enterprise under a general scheme of coördination. In the last analysis, the responsibility for the success or failure

of adequate measures of relief rested with the A.R.A. The needs of Russia were so vast that they could not be successfully met by uncoördinated efforts, which, though well intentioned, would inevitably have been haphazard and unable, for lack of assured resources or organization, to insure the feeding of a specified number of persons until the harvest of 1922. The cause of the starving in Russia would have been badly, wastefully served had these societies, and the other groups that would have followed them, competed with each other for public support, purchased in small quantities, shipped in part cargo lots (the most expensive way), and distributed in Russia with unorganized transportation, each after his own fashion, wherever his spirit moved, and whenever the funds in hand permitted. With so many organizations differing in origin, aims and methods, there was inevitably some friction, but it is to the credit of those who coöperated in this project that the friction was overcome, the differences adjusted, and the end never lost sight of in the dust of small quarrels.

The meeting of the European Relief Council on August 24 was attended by representatives of the American Friends Service Committee, the American Red Cross, Federal Council of Churches, Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, Knights of Columbus, National Catholic Welfare Council, Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association, and the A.R.A.<sup>31</sup> After discussion of the work which each society proposed to carry on, an agreement<sup>32</sup> embracing the following points was drawn up and accepted by the organizations represented: (a) the protection of the Riga Agreement; (b) the assignment of a special area to the Friends to be ad-

<sup>31</sup> Present at this meeting were: Jas. A. Norton, Rufus M. Jones, Wilbur K. Thomas of the American Friends Service Committee; W. F. Persons, Eliot Wadsworth, Geo. A. Sloane of the American Red Cross; Herbert Hoover, Edgar Rickard, Julius H. Barnes, Wm. N. Haskell of the A.R.A.; John H. Finley, E. O. Watson, Jas. H. Franklin, R. B. Guild of the Federal Council of Churches; Felix M. Warburg, Lewis L. Strauss, Jas. N. Rosenberg of the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee; P. J. Callahan of the Knights of Columbus; C. A. McMahon of the National Catholic Welfare Council; C. V. Hibbard of the Young Men's Christian Association; Mrs. Elizabeth B. Cotton of the Young Women's Christian Association.

<sup>32</sup> Subsequently, the American Friends Service Committee asked for a revision of the European Relief Council agreement in so far as it applied to them. The points at issue were temporarily adjusted. After a few months, however, the American Friends Service Committee withdrew from its affiliation with the A.R.A. and operated under its own agreement with the Soviet Government.

ministered under their own name and ideals, and in conformity to the Riga Agreement; (c) each society to have a representative on the staff of the A.R.A. Director in Russia; (d) relations with Soviet Government to be through A.R.A. Director; (e) the A.R.A. Director to have such authority over distributing personnel as required by Riga Agreement; (f) each organization to designate its relief as American; (g) each society to be guided by its own views in collection of funds; (h) the A.R.A. to give its purchasing, transport, and warehouse services, internal and external, at cost to other societies.<sup>33</sup>

Shortly after the European Relief Council agreement was formulated, several other societies which proposed to work in Russia made arrangements to do so in affiliation with the A.R.A. These were the Volga Relief Society, the National Lutheran Council, the American Mennonite Relief, and the Southern Baptist Convention, all of whom accepted the terms of the E.R.C. Agreement. Arrangements with the A.R.A. enabled them to deliver relief to a special group or locality in coöperation with the A.R.A. Russian Unit, receiving its protection and the use of its facilities both in America and in Russia.

The A.R.A. endeavored to make its facilities available in such a way that they could be used advantageously by organizations of different types with different aims and with varying resources. In general, however, for the sake of the efficiency of the whole relief plan, it sought to have each organization work on a definite schedule, assuming the responsibility for a specific area or a definite number of people for a given length of time. This was to avoid the method, frequently employed, where no stated program is followed, but the field of relief is expanded or contracted according to the resources temporarily in hand, resulting in waste of effort and ineffective application of available supplies, and often of a return of actual starvation after a few weeks' or months' effort.

It was, of course, necessary for all of these societies to ap-

<sup>33</sup> Full text of the Agreement is given in Appendix A, Doc. II. Frank C. Page, Secretary of the A.R.A., was primarily responsible for the effective liaison with the affiliated societies.



peal to their constituents for the funds to carry out a specific program. The methods by which these appeals were made were largely determined by the constituency of the different relief societies and the objectives they had in view. For example, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (J.D.C.) had in September (1921) issued an appeal to the Jews of the United States for \$14,000,000 to relieve the suffering of their people abroad who were victims of the World War. Of the funds collected by this campaign they proposed to allocate \$5,000,000 for relief in Russia. This relief was to be delivered through the A.R.A. in its regular channels, to be applied to the Ukraine and White Russia, where the greatest number of Jews were to be found, but to be distributed to the most needy, without regard to race or religion.

The Volga Relief Society appealed to members of the German race in the United States and Canada for funds to bring relief to the German colonies in Russia, particularly those near Saratov on the Volga River. The National Lutheran Council and the American Mennonite Relief conducted their campaigns through the medium of their church organizations and devoted their funds to the relief of members of their faith in Russia. The Southern Baptist Convention likewise worked through its denominational organization and was interested particularly in the relief of Baptists in Russia. The Federal Council of Churches appealed to all the denominations affiliated with that body, the funds being made available for relief through the A.R.A. Food Remittance system. The National Catholic Welfare Council, and other organizations of the Catholic Church, raised funds among their members and secured further resources through the Apostolic delegation at Washington. They took over specific areas, notably in Orenburg and the Crimea, in which they furnished relief to the needy without regard to faith. Each of these organizations distributed through the machinery of the A.R.A., and each was represented on the staff of the A.R.A. Russian Unit. In the case of the organizations which restricted their relief to members of a particular faith, the representative of that organization was responsible for the selection of the beneficiaries. In the case of the other organizations which distributed without

restrictions, the representatives with the Russian Unit became to all intents and purposes members of the A.R.A. field staff, who were in charge of the distribution in the area assigned to them.

The American Friends Service Committee was in a somewhat different category. This society had been doing notable relief work in Russia on a small scale since 1916 (with a break of several months in 1919) in coöperation with organizations of Friends of other countries, particularly of Great Britain. The funds for this work had been secured largely through the Quaker organizations in America and England,<sup>34</sup> with some support from other countries, and the work had been conducted as an international relief effort, distributed largely through the existing institutions of the Soviet Government. When the famine came and with it the appeal from the Soviet Government for assistance, the American Friends Service Committee prepared to expand its program beyond the institutional work that it had been doing, in order to extend relief to all classes of the population, in the famine area. The question arose whether the program should be carried out under the arrangements with the Soviet authorities which the A.F.S.C. had already made, as an international enterprise, or as a part of the purely American effort along the lines laid down in the Riga Agreement. For the reasons which have been set forth, the A.F.S.C. was asked by the President and by Hoover to accept the Riga Agreement as the charter of their relations with the Soviet Government; to work under the general direction of the A.R.A. Director in Russia in coördinating their program with that of the A.R.A.; at the same time to have freedom of action in the matter of raising funds in America and in the application of relief according to the ideals of the society; and to take advantage of the larger facilities of the A.R.A. in the purchasing, transporting, and handling of supplies. This relationship was explained in a letter to Professor Rufus Jones, September 10, 1921, in which the A.R.A., through its chairman, endorsed the work of the American Friends Service Committee:

<sup>34</sup> The A.R.A. had contributed \$100,000 to this work, the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee \$115,000, and the American Red Cross \$100,000. The work in Russia of the affiliated societies is discussed in Chapter XX.

"In response to your request I beg to say that the efforts being made by the Friends Service Committee to secure charitable subscriptions for their work of famine relief in Russia has my fullest support . . .

"None of the organizations coöperating under the Riga and European Relief Council agreements, which you have accepted, are in any way losing their identity or supervision of their own distribution, subject only to coördination for the common good of the Russian people. The sole purpose of these arrangements is to assure protection and efficiency in administration that every cent shall do its utmost in saving life—that the whole effort shall be American in name and ideals.

"I trust that you will have the support the cause deserves." <sup>35</sup>

In addition to the appeal which the A.F.S.C. made among the people of the Quaker faith, a campaign committee known as the Russian Famine Fund <sup>36</sup> made a general appeal for funds for Russian relief, to be turned over to the A.F.S.C., or to other relief organizations which might be designated by the contributor.

As has been noted, all of these organizations, as well as a great number of volunteer committees, were putting forward appeals for contributions. These many campaigns resulted in many complications which could not have been avoided. For example, one committee reported that it was having great difficulty in collecting funds because those who were solicited held back in the belief that the A.R.A. would make a national appeal to which they would be asked to contribute. Later when the A.R.A. was contemplating a letter appeal to its former contributors, this same society insisted that this plan, if carried out, would interfere with their campaign. Still later, when the appropriation bill was introduced in Congress, this society sadly reported that in view of the probable government donations, individual contributors were saying that it would be

<sup>35</sup> This letter was used by the Friends in their appeals. *Bulletin of the American Friends Service Committee*, No. 41.

<sup>36</sup> The principal officers of this Fund were: Allen Wardwell, Chairman; Charles H. Sabin, Treasurer; Harry Powers Story, Secretary. The Executive Committee consisted of the following: Jane Addams, Mrs. August Belmont, Charles C. Burlingham, William M. Chadbourne, Paul D. Cravath, Lewis S. Gannett, Robert Morse Lovett, Walter W. Pettit, Frank L. Polk, Graham Romeyn Taylor, Helen Todd, Felix M. Warburg, L. Hollingsworth Wood.



unnecessary for them to give anything. These instances illustrate how the work of individual organizations was unavoidably affected in the carrying out of the larger plan for the mobilization of the greatest possible sum. The very existence of so enormous an organization as the A.R.A. was in certain respects a hindrance to the smaller agencies, no matter how great an effort was made on both sides at coöperation.

Nevertheless, one and all asked for endorsement from the A.R.A. In most cases such endorsements were given, it being the sense of the Chairman and the Directors of the A.R.A. that the mobilization of funds for relief should be encouraged wherever the societies soliciting funds had either a satisfactory distributing organization of their own or proposed to apply their relief through an organization which did have. It was not felt, however, that the A.R.A. could endorse any committee, no matter how exalted its motives were said to be, which did not employ methods which would, in its opinion, insure an effective use of contributed funds. Refusal to endorse a certain committee, whose methods were not approved, brought down on the chairman's head a good deal of abuse, as will presently appear.

But to the Friends, the Russian Famine Fund, the J.D.C., and the other societies of recognized standing, Hoover gave the support of his name and influence during the period between the negotiations with the Soviet Government and the passing of the \$20,000,000 appropriation by Congress. The appropriations of Congress and the Soviet Government necessarily altered the situation in respect to the solicitation of relief funds, and a number of new issues were raised which will be discussed in a later chapter.

Two large appropriations were made to the A.R.A. for its Russian work by organizations which bore a different relationship to the A.R.A. than any of those mentioned above. The first of these was the American Red Cross (A.R.C.) which, as has been noted, interested itself in the medical work of the A.R.A. As soon as the Riga Agreement was signed, discussions with the Red Cross were held and an agreement drawn up (September 2, 1921) defining the relations between that organization and the A.R.A. It provided among other things

that: (a) selection and purchase of medical supplies to the limit of the A.R.C. appropriation (\$3,000,000, later raised to \$3,600,000) should be in the hands of the A.R.C.; (b) that the A.R.A. should assume cost of distribution of supplies within Russia and the payment of salaries of men on Medical Staff up to ten (this limit was later extended); (c) that applications for employment on A.R.A. Medical Staff should be submitted to the A.R.C. for acknowledgment and file.<sup>37</sup> The A.R.C. had no representatives in Russia other than the Chief of the Medical Division who had been nominated by the Red Cross, but was, of course, an official of the A.R.A. Russian Unit.

Another organization which had no representative in Russia, but which made important contributions was the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial. Gifts to the A.R.A. from this source for Russian relief, exclusive of large funds for refugee feeding in Constantinople, amounted to \$1,127,392.88. The first appropriation from the Memorial was made to cover the expense of inspection and packing of medical supplies made available by Congress, and the transportation of these supplies from the Medical Supply Depots to the seaboard. This appropriation amounted to \$267,392.88. Later an appropriation of \$30,000 was made to assist in student feeding in Russia, and another appropriation of \$830,000 for the general relief program.<sup>38</sup>

#### PURCHASING AND SHIPPING

In carrying out the President's Executive Order of December 24, 1921, the Purchasing Commission for Russian Relief faced the task of accomplishing a very great deal in a very short time.<sup>39</sup> Speed was necessarily the primary consideration, since, if the American grain was to do the most good,

<sup>37</sup> Full text of the A.R.C.-A.R.A. agreement is given in Appendix A, Doc. III. Those who participated in these discussions and in the drafting of this agreement were: G. A. Sloane and B. A. Harlan for the A.R.C., and Edgar Rickard, W. N. Haskell, J. W. Krueger, Henry Beeuwkes, W. P. Davenport, for the A.R.A.

<sup>38</sup> For further discussion of the Red Cross donation see Chapter XVIII. For the use of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial donations see Chapters XVI and XVII.

<sup>39</sup> In this matter the United States Grain Corporation acted as the fiscal agent of the Purchasing Commission. The Secretary of the Purchasing Commission was G. Roy Hall.

it must be bought, moved to the seaboard, and shipped in order to reach Russia at the time when it was most badly needed. The Commission, however, could not do the obvious thing under these circumstances, that is, buy at once the full amount of commodities authorized by the act, and ship them by every available carrier as soon as the supplies could be put on the ships. There were several reasons which made this procedure impracticable, the most important being shipping and port facilities in Russia. Had it been otherwise possible for the Commission to buy and to ship all at once the greater portion of the authorized purchases, neither the Russian transportation system nor the ports of entry could have handled this great influx of commodities. The result would have been a more serious congestion on railways and at ports than actually occurred (and this was considerable) with resulting demurrage and loss of supplies through inadequate storage and handling facilities. The policy adopted by the Commission was to hold weekly meetings at which bids were received from dealers in those commodities which the Commission was buying. The Commission released notices of intention to purchase commodities with specifications each week to the press, grain news agencies, grain exchanges, and boards of trade. It then immediately awarded contracts covering the intended purchases to the sellers offering the best prices and terms.

The first announcement regarding the intended purchases was made by the Commission, on December 23, the day before the Commission was actually appointed by the President. This early notice was for the purpose of expediting the first shipments, and as a result of this prompt action, the first grain was purchased, the first ship chartered, actually loaded, and ready to sail five days after the Executive Order was signed. Due to circumstances over which the Commission had no control, this ship did not sail until January 4th. It reached its destination, Novorossisk, a month later, and on the 17th of February, fifty-five days after the Commission was appointed, this grain was being delivered to the hungry people of the Volga Valley.

The efforts of the Commission to charter the number of boats it required to handle these January deliveries precipi-



tated a controversy with shipping interests. Within the period of a week the charter rates on American vessels to the Baltic had been raised from \$6.80 a ton to \$8.50 or \$8.75. This increase was considerably greater than on foreign ships where the increase had been from \$4.20 to \$5.00. The Purchasing Commission protested both directly to the shipping interests and by public announcement of the situation. The matter was finally adjusted by a conference with President Harding, attended by Hoover and the Chairman of the Shipping Board. At this time the Shipping Board undertook to transport relief commodities at cost. It was also agreed that \$1.50 a ton above the going rate for foreign ships was a reasonable standard by which to judge the fairness of the rates offered by the American ship owners, who claimed that the higher operating cost on American ships made it impossible to offer as low rates as foreign lines.

The Commission pushed forward its buying and shipping program to such effect that from the 4th of January, when the first vessel sailed, to the end of that month, twenty-eight vessels carrying Purchasing Commission cargoes left American ports. Because of the threatened congestion at Russian ports, shipments during February and March were reduced, the rate of sailing being about one ship every two days, rather than one ship every day as in January, the number of sailings in February being 16, and in March 13. The 19 vessels that sailed during April practically brought to an end the heavy program, only a few vessels being employed in later months to complete the transportation of the Commission's purchases. The total number of vessels employed by the Commission was 94.

In the handling of this great movement of commodities, the Purchasing Commission was immeasurably aided in its port problem by Julius H. Barnes, Vice-Chairman of the A.R.A. Immediately after the Commission had been appointed, Barnes offered, without any compensation whatever, the port facilities of his company, which had representatives in practically every American port. He declined to allow his firm to offer any grain for sale to the Commission, as he had previously declined to sell to the A.R.A., because of his official connection with it.

The necessity of delivering the supplies in Russia as quickly as possible caused the Commission to buy and ship corn in bulk, which was immediately available, rather than to wait to have the corn bagged or milled. Realizing, however, that the facilities of certain Russian ports were inadequate for the handling of bulk corn and that a high percentage of Russian freight cars were not in condition to transport it, the Commission placed upon the first ships a large number of grain sacks as well as quantities of lumber, nails, slings and tarpaulins, articles which the A.R.A. port representatives in Russia advised could not be supplied in Russia, for use in the ports where the ships discharged.<sup>40</sup> The great value of these supplies in facilitating the unloading of the cargoes was attested in the letters from the A.R.A. port representatives.

In addition to the food commodities, the Commission bought seed wheat and seed corn. In making these purchases, care was taken that the seeds should come from those northwestern states where climatic conditions were approximately those of Russia, and the sellers were required to furnish documents showing that the seed they delivered was grown in the specified states. The buying of seed grain and bulk corn, as well as the greater part of other commodities, was completed by the first of March. Corn grits and preserved milk were bought later, the purchasing activities of the Commission being definitely finished in June, 1922. The total net expenditure of the amount under the act was \$18,371,633.64 and the commodities purchased included 8,147,293 bushels of No. 2 mixed corn; 1,357,234 bushels of Amber Durham seed wheat; 82,633 long tons of corn grits; 724,760 bushels of seed corn; 752,650

<sup>40</sup> At the beginning of its operations the Purchasing Commission was offered much advice. Some of it was good and some of it peculiar. For example, one senator wanted to have the grain prepared in various forms used in this country and put up in small packages with directions to tell the Russians how to use it. His reason for advocating this was that he believed there were poor milling facilities in Russia and he was certain that preparation of these packages would give employment to a large number of people in the United States.

Some objection also was raised to the purchase of corn, particularly in bulk, as it was argued that the Russians did not eat corn and that they would not know how to prepare it, if they received it in bulk. These fears were shown to be groundless. Bulk corn unquestionably offered the greatest nutritive value for the money of any grain. For further discussion of this matter see J. R. Ellington, "The Use of Corn and Its Success in Russia," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XLI, 13-16.

bushels of seed rye; 870,143 cases of evaporated milk; 33,787 cases of condensed milk.<sup>41</sup>

Concurrently with the Purchasing Commission's activities, the A.R.A. continued its large scale purchasing of a great variety of commodities for its own growing program for the needs of the coöperating societies, and for the Soviet Government. A staff of experts in buying, shipping, and accounting kept extremely busy handling the demands of the food remittance operation, and children's relief which involved sixteen different commodities amounting to 246,913.42 tons. The first order to buy for the Soviet Government under the agreement came on January 10, 1922. Other orders followed at intervals, so that by the first week in March virtually the whole of the 20,000,000 Russian gold rubles and other Russian credits, all amounting to approximately \$11,500,000, had been expended. Brown and Krassin made a final settlement of this account by an agreement executed on June 2, 1922.<sup>42</sup>

No glamour, no bright element of human interest attaches to the sober business of buying grain, chartering ships, and keeping accounts. These activities are dull beside the stories of political manoeuvres, of ardent controversies, and adventures in Russian outposts; yet they contributed a vital part to the A.R.A.'s success and the manner of their execution was a characteristic feature of the international humanitarianism exemplified by the A.R.A. In its Russian work as in its earlier campaigns in Central Europe, the A.R.A., like its predecessor, the Commission for Relief in Belgium, commanded the services of men experienced in large affairs and skilled in the details of their management. They applied to this enterprise of philanthropy the minds and energies developed in the building of great industrial and commercial operations and translated into facts the vision they shared with their chief.

<sup>41</sup> *Report of the United States Grain Corporation, Fiscal Agent for the Purchasing Commission for Russian Relief*, December 15, 1922.

<sup>42</sup> *Agreement between the American Relief Administration and the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Republic covering final settlement of joint account of the Soviet Authorities with A.R.A.*, signed by Walter Lyman Brown, Director for Europe, for the A.R.A., and Leonid Krassin, Peoples' Commissar for Foreign Trade, for the R.S.F.S.R. and the U.S.R. of June 2, 1922.



## SUMMARY OF RELIEF SUPPLIES PURCHASED AND SHIPPED

The foregoing pages have described how the relief funds were mobilized and, briefly, the methods of purchase. The bulk of the buying and the heaviest movement of supplies occurred in the early months of 1922, the period covered by this chapter. Though very considerable purchases were made in succeeding months, it is convenient to summarize here, briefly, this aspect of the operations.<sup>43</sup>

The original \$5,000,000 available for Russian relief was increased to over \$60,000,000. The commodities purchased were: *over two hundred and one thousand* tons of corn and *ninety-one thousand* tons of corn grits; *one hundred and thirty thousand* tons of flour, *forty-three thousand* tons of preserved milk, *twenty thousand* of sugar, *eighteen thousand* of rice, and *twelve thousand* of fats; *one hundred and thirty-seven thousand* tons of seed wheat, *eighteen thousand* of seed corn, *twenty-two thousand* of seed rye; *eight thousand* tons of peas and beans; *three thousand* of cocoa. These with other commodities made a total of foodstuffs of *seven hundred and nine thousand, five hundred and seven* tons. In addition to these *over six thousand* tons of medical supplies, *over two thousand* tons of clothing, and more than *six hundred* tons of soap were procured, transported, and distributed, bringing the total of all commodities to *seven hundred and eighteen thousand seven hundred and seventy* tons.

<sup>43</sup> Summary statistical tables are given in Appendix B.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE RUSSIAN TRANSPORT CRISIS

#### THE PORTS <sup>1</sup>

THERE may have been four or five people in America, and not many more in Russia, who had a real conception of the degree of dilapidation of Russian transport and knew that, no matter how well things went here in America, there lurked in the Russian background of the relief program the sombre possibility that the American supplies might not reach the starving in time, or that the transport system would break down completely under the strain of carrying such vast stocks. Some intimations of transport difficulties appeared in the press (to be attacked by American radicals as anti-soviet propaganda), but there was no public report which told how nearly the transport system came to a collapse, or how close the A.R.A. came to an open break with the Soviet Government.

The transport problem fell into three main divisions. First the ports, where the important considerations were capacity to receive grain ships, equipment for handling and storage of cargoes, and rail facilities for evacuation. Second, railway administration, which included not only the repair of rolling stock, provision of labor and fuel, and traffic management, but coöperation with the A.R.A. Third, the final stage between railhead and village, where the problem was of man and animal power.

In the matter of ports, the A.R.A. had to consider a number of factors. It could not, for example, select one port on the Baltic to serve the northern famine regions, and another on

<sup>1</sup>"The Baltic Port Relief Operations," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, Bulletin XXX, 6-23. J. H. Lange, "Novorossisk Port Operations," *Ibid.*, XXXII, 52-63. J. N. Brown, "Odessa Port in Russian Relief," *Ibid.*, XXXV, 29-44. For a full account of the Russian transport crisis see Sidney Brooks, "Russian Railroads in the National Crisis," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XLII.

TABLE

SHOWING A.R.A. RELIEF SUPPLIES DISCHARGED IN RUSSIAN PORTS,\* THE SUPPLIES EVACUATED AND THE SUPPLIES THAT HAD TO BE STORED FOR LACK OF RAILWAY CARS, IN METRIC TONS

Period ending	Discharged from ships during period	Evacuated from ports during period	Stored at ports awaiting cars at end of period "
October 28, 1921.....	16,120	15,935	185
November 25, " .....	11,250	2,358	9,077
December 30, " .....	10,356	11,351	8,082
January 27, 1922.....	6,454	11,634	2,902
February 24, " .....	28,394 <sup>c</sup>	17,675	13,621
March 4, " .....	109,215	23,896	98,940
March 11, " .....	46,627	35,757	119,810
March 18, " .....	48,152	54,827	103,135
March 25, " .....	23,852	39,342	87,645
March 31, " .....	53,849	35,816	105,678
April 8, " .....	31,148	66,567	70,257
April 15, " .....	43,492	28,127	85,624
April 22, " .....	7,407	22,087	70,944
April 29, " .....	44,593	50,483	65,054
May 5, " .....	7,192	19,455	52,791
May 12, " .....	8,267	13,488	47,571
May 19, " .....	43,814	34,247	57,037
May 31, " .....	15,757	26,879	46,015
June 9, " .....	18,741	10,255	54,501
June 16, " .....	13,656	16,469	51,688
June 30, " .....	5,610	19,437	37,861
July 14, " .....	7,862	24,044	21,679
August 18, " .....	22,261	37,013	6,927
	624,069	617,142	

\* These include all ports available to the A.R.A., viz., Petrograd, Odessa, Theodosia, Novorossisk, and Batum (Russian); Reval (Estonian); Riga, Windau, Libau (Latvian); and Danzig (Free City).

<sup>b</sup> It must be remembered that the A.R.A. had no wish to store anything at the ports. Had the railway situation permitted, it would have transferred cargoes directly to cars and shipped to the famine districts. The fact that from late February to early July it was necessary to store from 53,000 to 130,000 tons demonstrates not merely that the capacity of the Russian transport system set limits to the amount of relief possible, but also that the A.R.A. delivered at the ports more supplies than it was possible for the railways to handle during the period of greatest emergency.

<sup>c</sup> Black Sea ports were in use after February.

<sup>d</sup> Supplies arriving after this date were primarily for the post-famine program.

the Black Sea, to serve the southern, for there were no two ports with sufficient equipment for the task. On the other hand, it was impossible to use all the ports on the Baltic and all on the Black Sea, first, because there were not enough cars and locomotives to allow such a dispersion, and, second, because a great number of the ports had so deteriorated that they



were useless. Such was the case of the ports on the Sea of Azov, which, through want of dredging, had become too shallow for ocean-going steamers, while ports like Berdiansk, Nikolaiev, and Sevastopol were useless at this time because of the condition of the rail connections.

After its own investigation and in consultation with the Soviet Government, the A.R.A. decided to use all ports which could receive ocean-going ships, and at which the railroads could provide empty cars. The northern port which offered the important advantage of being nearest to the Volga famine region, and which possessed in its more prosperous days up-to-date equipment, was Petrograd. Like everything else in Russia, however, it had suffered, and its equipment, as well as its railroad yards and approaches, were in a state of semi-dilapidation. Like other Russian ports, Petrograd was equipped for the export rather than for the import of grain, and this forced the A.R.A. to convert the export grain elevator into an import elevator when the port was used. But Petrograd was closed during the winter months on account of ice, and so during the period of greatest strain was unavailable.

Reval, in Estonia, was the best equipped Baltic port for unloading bulk grain. For this reason the Soviet Government used it for its own importation, and supplied it with two ice-breakers to keep the channel open. But the fact that Reval was used by the Soviet Government limited its availability for the A.R.A., and even with full coöperation from the Estonian officials, the A.R.A. representative had to battle constantly to secure his quota of empty cars. When the supply of Russian cars gave out, long negotiations followed to secure the use of Estonian cars, for the Estonians were reluctant to let their rolling stock pass the Russian border, whence they felt it might never return. At first they agreed to send cars as far as Petrograd, where the contents were transferred to Russian cars, and later an agreement was reached which permitted the billing of Estonian cars to any interior point, the Russians agreeing to pay demurrage if the cars were not returned within fifteen days.

Riga, the capital of Latvia, which had been used by the A.R.A. during the early months, lacked, as did Reval, suffi-

cient warehouses. During the winter such as existed were badly overtaxed through the inability of the Soviet Government to supply the required number of cars. There was the same difficulty here as in Reval, regarding the use of Latvian cars in Russian territory, but as in the other case, the A.R.A. succeeded in bringing about an agreement between the railway administrations of the two countries, which, incidentally, was of great benefit not only to the relief campaign, but to the growth of commercial activity.

If the larger Baltic ports had not been closed eventually on account of ice, the little port of Windau would never have been used by the A.R.A. It was shallow; its quays, warehouses, and tracks had been badly damaged during the war; and the gauge of its railroad connections had been altered by the Germans during their occupation, necessitating transshipment to Russian cars.<sup>2</sup> Although about two-thirds of the space of this port was assigned to the A.R.A., even this proved insufficient when cars for evacuation failed to materialize.

Although Libau possessed many natural advantages over other Baltic ports, and in addition had two large elevators with machinery for handling the import of bulk grain, it offered to the A.R.A. the same handicap as did its neighbor, Windau, since its railroad had likewise been changed to suit the tactical convenience of the Germans. Because of this limitation, and at the request of the Russian railway officials, Libau was but little used, and only to supplement other ports.

In its attempt to increase port facilities the A.R.A. discussed with the Soviet Government the Finnish port of Hango, from which shipments could be made directly into Russia, and the Free City of Danzig, whence shipments might be made across Poland and into Russia by way of Stolpce and Minsk. The Government at first received these suggestions without enthusiasm, but when the situation was more completely realized, agreed to the plan. Nothing, however, came of the Hango proposition, because Soviet Russia and Finland were then

<sup>2</sup> In changing the railways west of Riga from the broad Russian gauge to the standard European gauge, the Germans proceeded in their usual thorough and efficient fashion. They cut off the crossties and removed the ballast to prevent the shifting of the track to the old gauge without entirely rebuilding the lines.

wrangling over the question of Karelia, so that one country was not in the mood to ask favors, nor the other to grant them. Danzig, however, through which the A.R.A. for several years had been importing its supplies for Polish children, was used to excellent purpose. The Polish Government generously offered to transport Russian relief materials across its territory without charge.<sup>3</sup> Special fast trains carried these supplies, and at Stolpce they were transferred to Russian cars.

In connection with this shipment of supplies across Poland there occurred another incident which illustrates how the A.R.A. sometimes succeeded as mediator in international affairs, after diplomacy had failed. The Polish Government asked the A.R.A. to use its good offices in bringing about the ratification of a Polish-Russian general railway agreement, that had been hanging fire for several months. The A.R.A. took up the subject with Moscow, and the agreement was ratified. One clause dealt with and facilitated the return of Polish refugees from Russia.

Of all the Black Sea ports, Novorossisk offered the most advantages.<sup>4</sup> It was closest to the southern Volga famine district, and, as it was the principal port for the export of grain from the Kuban, it possessed equipment of great utility for the A.R.A. As in the other ports, however, the years of war and revolution had left their mark in destruction and neglect. The bay was cluttered with wrecks of scuttled ships, but the harbor was clean. Only two quays were in condition to be used, but by some freak of chance the grain elevator had escaped the devastating process that had reduced the warehouse space from one hundred and thirty-five thousand tons to two thousand, and had removed or rendered useless some twenty miles of track in the railway yards. The warehouses in condition for use required a general housecleaning before they could be taken over by the A.R.A., for they contained, like the attic of an old house, an extraordinary collection of forgotten things.

<sup>3</sup> "Coöperation from Poland," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XVI, 9-10.

<sup>4</sup> American destroyers under the command of Rear Admiral Bristol, United States High Commissioner at Constantinople, greatly facilitated the movements and, later on, the communications of A.R.A. port officials in the Black Sea. Members of the A.R.A. are greatly indebted to Admiral Bristol and the officers and men under his command for their friendly and efficient coöperation.



There was everything from artillery pieces to empty boxes, the accumulation of various revolutionary administrations, which had either passed out of existence, or, if still in being, had forgotten all about these things so assiduously hoarded. Even the port officials had no idea what the warehouses contained, to whom the articles belonged theoretically, and what they were being kept for.

Of the Crimean ports, only Theodosia had sufficient rail connections to be used by the A.R.A. Much to the surprise of the American port officer, he found the port and railway yards in first-class condition. This was particularly noteworthy, for the Crimea had been the scene of much counter-revolutionary activity. But the destruction was much less marked than in other sections, such as the Don region and the Donetz, perhaps because the evacuation of the last White forces under Baron Wrangel was too precipitate to permit the usual procedure to be followed. Yet even the port of Theodosia, with its exceptional equipment and the fine spirit of coöperation of its people, had its drawbacks, for it was soon discovered that the condition of the railway lines leading into the Crimea was so bad that it was impossible for the railway administration to maintain a supply of cars sufficient to handle the A.R.A. imports.

Odessa, the great trading center of southern Russia, and third city in size of the empire, offered remnants of more elevator equipment than was possessed by the other Black Sea ports. The three stone piers, with broad gauge railway tracks, land and floating cranes, formed exceptional facilities for unloading cargoes. The warehouses, however, had badly deteriorated, and required rehabilitation before they could receive the American supplies, and the warped and spread rails, the rotted ties, needed many replacements before the originally well laid out railway yards could be utilized. As in the case of Theodosia, the railway authorities were unable to maintain the supply of empty cars. This, and the fact of the long railway haul to the Volga, made Odessa useful mainly to handle the overflow tonnage from Novorossisk and Theodosia. Later it was used for the Ukrainian relief operations, begun by the A.R.A. in coöperation with the J.D.C. in the spring of 1922.

Another important Black Sea port, which was but little used by the A.R.A., was Batum. The possibilities of the Batum-Baku-Caspian-Astrakhan route were investigated by the A.R.A. in the autumn of 1921. The railway authorities, on technical grounds, and the Soviet Government, for political reasons, frowned upon the use of the Caucasian railways, which would, in fact, have been of doubtful service, because of their inadequate equipment, both in terminals and rolling stock. The Caspian, moreover, was full of ice in 1921-22, and Astrakhan, at the mouth of the Volga, lacked the storage and other facilities necessary in a transshipment point. These considerations caused the abandonment of a project to ship by rail across the Caucasus, thence by boat to Astrakhan, and then by barge along the shore of the Caspian and up the Ural River to Orenburg and the Kirghiz country, regions difficult of access by rail from the west.

The first setback in the great shipping program was one which had not been anticipated. The winter of 1922 was the most severe that the Baltic region had known in fifteen years. The Baltic was full of ice, and the port of Riga closed on January 18, not to open until April 29. Petrograd, of course, was closed, as had been expected. But the full capacities of even the open ports of Windau and Libau could not be used, because many of the relief ships that had been directed to them were locked fast in the Kiel Canal and the Skagerrack. The approaches to the harbor of Reval also froze, and the two Russian ice-breakers, brought down from Petrograd, were indifferently successful in keeping the channel clear. Conditions in the Baltic were such that navigation was extremely difficult, delaying the relief ships, so that they arrived not according to the plan, but in bunches, making even more difficult the work of evacuation and storage.

#### EVACUATION FROM PORTS

The telegraphic reports of speed with which the first ships in the Baltic and Black Seas were discharged, with which cars were loaded, and trains made up and sent out were encouraging to the A.R.A. offices in Moscow, London, and New York. The

success of these first operations was due to the car pools that had been established by the railway administration, in anticipation of the arrival of the first ships. As soon as the car pools were exhausted, however, the telegrams began to tell another story. From day to day, the A.R.A. port officers wired to headquarters in Moscow the amount of supplies they were being forced to store in the warehouses, and clamored for more cars. On March 3, the Baltic ports had only 4,595 tons in storage, but a week later this amount had jumped to 11,853. In another week it had gone up to 21,282 and was destined to go even higher. In the Black Sea ports, where the heavy arrivals had begun sooner, there were on February 25, 9,811 tons in storage; on March 4, 20,167; on the 11th, 28,303; and on the 18th, 32,795.

With the railways failing to evacuate the supplies that overflowed the warehouses, with local officials at first indifferent and incredulous, and then swamped and helpless by the demands made on them, the A.R.A. port officers, particularly in the dead ports of the south, lived through trying days. Novorossisk, which was the chief port of entry in the south for A.R.A. corn, had, like the other Black Sea ports, been so long dead that the first job which J. H. Lange, the A.R.A. port man, had to do, was to convince the local officials that a period of activity, such as had not been known for years, was at hand. A special Soviet railway commission had already visited the port and, in anticipation of the coming of American food, ordered the repair of three miles of track in the yards. But Lange found on his arrival that the switching yards were practically useless, and that unless at least a thousand yards of track received immediate attention, no corn could be moved by rail from the piers. Empty cars also gave him worry, for the local railway administration had no idea where empty cars were to be found, or how to get them, if they knew where they were. The station master, in fact, did not know how many cars fit for use there were in his own yards. The three hundred cars that had miraculously been collected to receive the cargo of the first ship, Lange discovered, included a large number that were useless unless repaired. Locomotives were in worse shape than the cars. Of the twenty-four in the station,



only six were fit to haul trains on the road, and only ten could be used to help to push the trains up the long grade from the port. Moreover, Lange soon found that his rolling-stock troubles were further complicated by certain competitive activities of the Soviet Government. A number of tank cars, purchased in Canada, for use in bringing oil from the Baku fields to Central Russia, had arrived just previously to the first American corn ship. Lange found, therefore, that the Novorossisk railway shops were too busily engaged in setting up the tank cars to put freight cars in condition to hold grain. More competition came a little later, when food supplies, purchased by the Commissariat of War for the Red Army, were discharged at the port and given priority in evacuation over the A.R.A. supplies. Lange finally appealed directly to Markov, the head of the South Western railways, who came immediately to Novorossisk, looked over the situation, realized the justice of Lange's complaints, and immediately took action. Within a short time, the rate of car repairs rose from ten per day to as high as forty-three. New ties and ballast were brought in, tracks and switches put in condition, and, perhaps of equal importance, the useless bureaucrat who had acted as station master was replaced by an energetic and capable railroad man, who gave splendid coöperation to the A.R.A., and achieved wonders in the reorganization of the port. The necessity for rising to the emergency of the A.R.A. program had such a marked effect on the morale and efficiency of the port and the railways that served it, that Markov begged Lange to use his influence to have cargoes continually shipped to Novorossisk, in order that the organization might be maintained at the standard which it had reached.

In some of the ports, the question of labor raised issues which, in a country governed by a proletarian directorship, have interest and significance. There was never, it need hardly be said, a shortage of labor, for industry and commerce were dead. The government officials to whom such matters were taken, were always able to supply any number of men experienced in any sort of manual labor that was required. Trouble came at pay day, when the government, which was responsible for the workmen's wages, being without resources for such a

cause, had to resort to promises, pleading, and threats to keep the men at work.<sup>5</sup> After being put off once or twice, the workmen did what workmen in capitalistic states do on even slighter provocation—they struck. All port activities thereupon ceased. Ships at the piers stood half-discharged, running up demurrage. Trains stood in the yards, half-loaded with supplies for which men in the famine villages waited in the very shadow of death. On such occasions, the A.R.A. port officer labored frantically to break the deadlock, begging and bullying both parties to settle their dispute, and sending hot messages to Moscow, demanding intervention from the Center.

In Theodosia, the strike was for higher wages, and a better ration. There was no question about the reasonableness of the strikers' demand, for their wages were incredibly low and the ration insufficient, and both were paid with diminishing frequency. The fact that the laborers were everywhere told that they were the rulers of the country was not enough, for, said the American who was present on this occasion, "Communist ideals are all right, but they buy no food for stevedores." The Theodosia officials, however, refused to grant the strikers' demands and, in the best capitalistic fashion, went out into the Crimean hills and recruited a force of strikebreakers from the Tartar shepherds and quarrymen. The Tartars were as ignorant of the business of stevedoring as of the principles of Communism, and their efforts were pitiful and disastrous. Half starved as they were, many, intoxicated by the sight of food, began to gorge themselves with raw corn and were soon in paroxysms of agony. So weak were they that it required at least two men to heave a single sack of corn, weighing a hundred and forty pounds, and even two were scarcely able to carry it for a distance of ten yards. For three days the

<sup>5</sup> Under "military communism," which came to an end in March, 1921, the citizen was obligated to give his services to the state, and the state to provide the citizen with food, clothes, housing, education, and so forth. Neither fulfilled these obligations satisfactorily, the conscription of labor was tried, and finally the system was superseded by "state capitalism," under which both citizen and state were to receive pay for the services and goods each provided. But this did not solve the old conflict between the citizen and the government, for the state, as the owner of the principal industries, became the only employer of labor of any consequence and as these industries for the most part operated at a loss, the problem of paying the citizen for his service was as troublesome as ever. How the A.R.A. had to take cognizance of this problem as it affected transport workers is described in the next chapter.

Tartars struggled desperately and ineffectively to discharge the ship, when the sight of other men working in their places became too much for the strikers. At the end of the third day they came back, asking to be allowed to go to work under the old conditions. The victorious officials agreed, but only under the condition that the strikers increase their speed of discharging. The half starved workers accepted this new burden, and bore it faithfully.

By improvisations the A.R.A. port men could overcome the physical disabilities of the ports; by diplomacy, patience, and persistence they could overcome the human factors, often more obstinate; but neither eloquence nor magic incantations could conjure out of the thin air railway trucks and locomotives to take away the supplies that overflowed the storage space. Day by day the visible supply of rolling stock diminished, and day by day the grain-laden ships arrived until, about the end of March, there were nearly sixty thousand tons of A.R.A. relief supplies in storage at the ports, dammed up by the railway stoppage. The warehouses—in the Baltic particularly—were inadequate to hold all that the ships discharged, and the railways failed to remove. At Reval it was necessary to stack five thousand tons of sacked corn in the open on the wharf, while at that very time no less than twenty-five steamers, of which six carried A.R.A. products, lay in Reval harbor waiting for berthing space.

#### THE COLLAPSE OF THE SOVIET CAR PROGRAM

To Haskell and his associates in Moscow, who saw the whole relief picture—the cargoes still afloat, the impending shortages in the feeding districts, the ghastly consequences if the supply failed—the car situation was like a stricture on the arteries of the relief organism, threatening to paralyze all its activities.

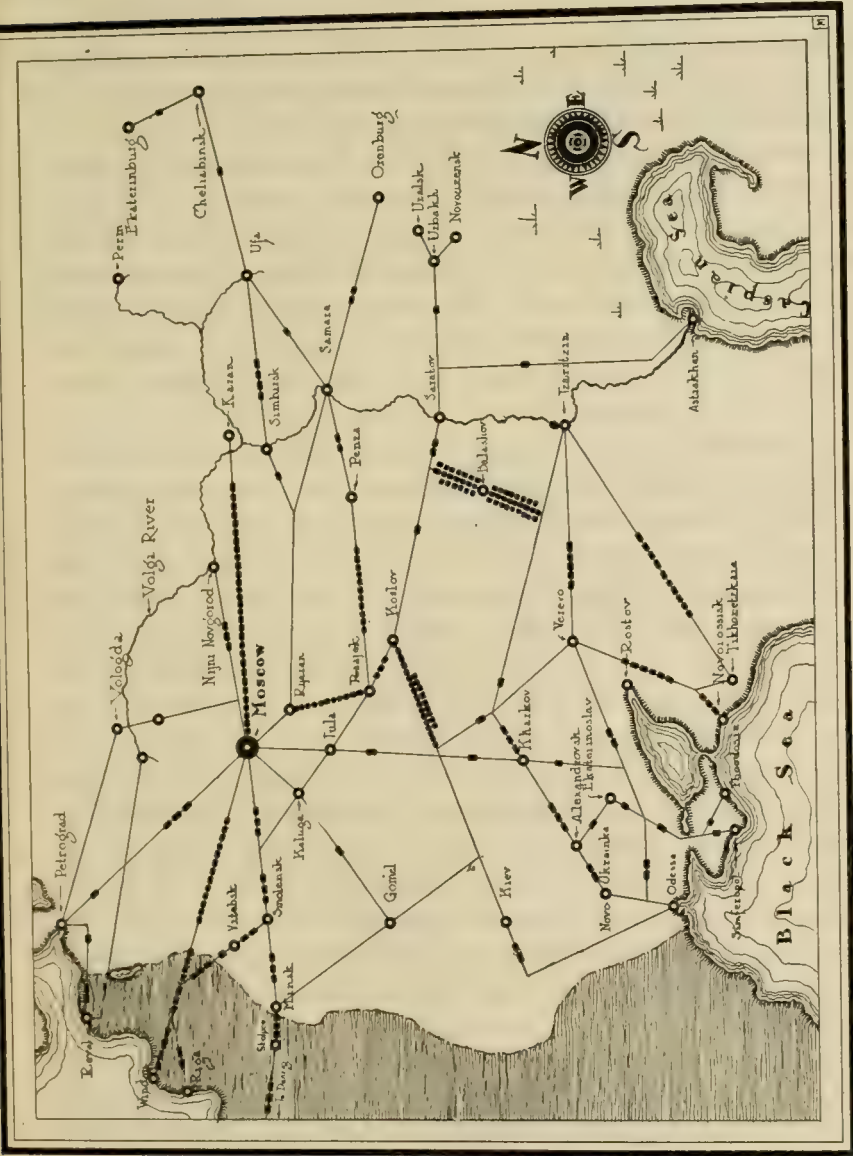
When the prospect of a six or sevenfold increased program which Hoover proposed first loomed on the horizon, Haskell had asked the Soviet Government if it could handle all the supplies that the A.R.A. contemplated bringing into Russia in the months of late winter and spring, for as will be shown in



later pages, he had already learned that all was not well with the railway system. The government promptly replied that the railroads could handle the imports, and that from four hundred to five hundred cars could be supplied daily at the ports of entry. Such a number of cars, Haskell realized, would be sufficient to handle from 180,000 to 200,000 tons a month. At about the same time Krassin, who subsequently became the head of an Extraordinary Railway Commission, told Dr. Nansen that the lines could handle 270,000 tons a month. On February 17, after the ships carrying the increased supplies began to leave the American seaboard, Kamenev promised in writing that the railroads could take care of 150,000 tons a month without difficulty. These assurances were naturally very welcome, especially as the A.R.A. was growing daily more aware of its difficulties in transportation.

But the bright sun of official optimism soon disappeared under the clouds of dark reports, when the original car pools were exhausted. In the Baltic, the Soviets had promised an average of eighty cars a day; less than fifteen were actually delivered. In the Black Sea, 236 cars were promised daily and only 58 were received. In an effort to jolt Eiduk (through whom the transport matters were handled) out of his complacency, Haskell wrote him, describing in detail the failure of the car program, and ending his letter with: "So far as I can see, the railroads are hopelessly congested and unable to move our foodstuffs." Eiduk thought differently and reported that the railway administration was sending telegrams authorizing the railroad officials at the ports to turn over to the A.R.A. the number of cars scheduled for delivery. It was a regal gesture, but useless, since the railroad officials and the A.R.A. knew full well from reports before them, that there were no cars at the ports to be turned over.

The inner councils of the Soviet Government were aware of the seriousness of the railway situation. Not only were the railroads failing to meet the requirements of the A.R.A., but they had been steadily falling behind in carrying out the seed program of the Government. The Government had created a Special and Extraordinary Commission on transport and placed Krassin, the Commissar of Foreign Trade, who was then in



Congestion of Relief Trains on Russian Railroads.  
(Each block represents a single shipment, usually a trainload.)

Moscow, at the head of it. The news of Krassin's appointment was encouraging to the A.R.A., for he was known to be an engineer, and an administrator of great ability, and, further, in the course of relations with him in London, extending over many months, the A.R.A. had found him a courteous and capable collaborator. Krassin's diagnosis was good; his treatment intelligent; but the patient got worse, and very shortly he confessed to Haskell, what was obvious, but what no other official would admit, that the railroads could not carry out the program they had agreed upon. Much against his will, Haskell had to accept a reduction of the schedule of empty cars for the ports. But the railways were no better able to make this schedule than the larger one. Again Haskell had to agree to another reduction at a moment when, considering the cargoes afloat, there should have been an increase. Haskell insisted, however, that, at least 250 cars must be delivered daily at the ports, and that these cars should be for shipment through to destination, without any unloading or transshipment at any point. If the railways were able to deliver more empty cars than this, he agreed that these cars might be directed to designated storage points for eventual shipment by water, as soon as the ice in the Volga broke. But even the 250 cars scheduled were more than the railways could deliver, and, while telegrams poured in from the feeding districts asking for more and more food, officials came to Haskell with the disheartening news that not more than 160 cars could possibly be sent daily from the ports to destination.<sup>6</sup> This drop from the 400 cars promised at the beginning to 160 meant not only overloading at the ports, but much more serious troubles at the feeding end of the line, where the deliveries would be no more than a third of what had been counted on.

There were many explanations for the failure of the supply of empty cars. The food trains were incredibly slow, seeming to crawl with maddening deliberation over long miles of track

<sup>6</sup>The car situation was complicated by the Soviet seed program, which, after desultory progress in January and February, reached its peak in March. Haskell recognized the importance of the seed distribution, but he resisted the tendency to allocate so great a proportion of cars to the seed program that the continuation of the A.R.A. feeding was threatened. Chapter VIII.



between the ports and the hungry. The first train to leave Odessa, with 43 cars of food, took a month to reach Simbirsk, a distance less than fifteen hundred miles. The trains coming to Moscow from the Baltic, by way of Petrograd, required anywhere from one to four weeks to cover the distance made by passenger trains in fourteen hours. The first train from Novorossisk to Ufa eventually arrived after many weeks' wanderings which, according to the Red Guards who accompanied it, had taken them over most of European Russia. The District Supervisor at Ufa wired the A.R.A. port representative at Novorossisk that he should equip his trains with sextant and compass and a map of the world. But the force of this merry thrust was lost on the port officer, for the telegram did not reach him until two months later, when all shipments had been completed.

With trains so long on the road, the empty cars and locomotives were soon used up, and the car pools at the ports were never reestablished. When eventually the first trains of corn from the Black Sea did arrive at Volga cities, Haskell was amazed to learn that the empties, instead of being returned to the ports, were being sent on to Siberia. Theoretically the policy of sending these cars on, especially those billed to points near the Siberian border, was sound, but owing to conditions then existing on the Siberian railways, it amounted to sending them to that bourne from which no traveler returns.<sup>7</sup>

The condition of rolling stock, about which enough has been said, steadily deteriorated under the pressure of the combined Soviet and A.R.A. demands. The patched and battered wrecks, described in official reports a few months before as "sick," were dragged forth from the repair shops, before they were fairly convalescent, and soon became victims of a complication of ailments. Like the men who operated them, they were overworked, and underfed. Fuel, in fact, was one of the most troublesome of the many railway difficulties. Coal

<sup>7</sup> Conditions on Siberian lines are described by F. A. Mackenzie, *Russia before Dawn*, 226-230, London, 1923. He writes: "On my journey from Moscow to Irkutsk and back I covered over 10,000 versts. . . . Our trains rarely exceeded twenty versts an hour (about fifteen miles). From Novo-Nikolaevsk to Irkutsk, a distance of a little over 1,700 versts, took nearly seven days, or an average, including stops, of less than seven miles an hour."

bought in England by the Soviet Government, which might have helped had it arrived sooner, was at the time of the crisis being discharged at Windau, where it competed with A.R.A. food supplies for transportation. The locomotives over the greater part of the lines were compelled to use wood, which consisted in the words of the official report at that time of "nothing but logs . . . in most cases wet and covered with ice and snow . . . giving no heat. . . . The gratings are ruined and finally the engines have to be taken out of service. . . ." <sup>8</sup>

The transport situation here described, so menacing to all relief operations, Russian as well as foreign, is attributable chiefly to physical factors, the deterioration of rolling stock, of roadbeds, of terminals, to the lack of fuel, of repair facilities and so forth. Russian transport was suffering from a creeping paralysis which spread steadily, relentlessly from week to week. But physical paralysis was not all; the disease had struck at the brain of the system, the human element, making impossible an efficient use of the healthy members that remained. Broken morale and administrative chaos came from many causes; war, social upheaval, political oppression, sabotage, hunger, and despair. The drastic treatment, prescribed in 1920 by Trotzky, the militarization of the railroads, <sup>9</sup> merely hastened the progress of the disease. Thus the A.R.A. had to contend not only with physical disability, but with the inertness and demoralization of the transport administration.

### RAILWAY ADMINISTRATION

Evidences of the weakness of transport administration were numerous long before the critical days of the spring of 1922. In the first months of the operation, before the volume of imports was sufficient to tax the physical capacity of the lines, the A.R.A. had difficulty in getting its shipments through to

<sup>8</sup> *Ekonomicheskaya Zhisn*, March 3, 1922.

<sup>9</sup> The conference of Trade Unions in Moscow, November, 1920, protested vigorously against militarization, which, incidentally, Trotzky wished to apply not only to transport but to all industry and even agriculture. These protests, however, were effective only in swelling the movement of resistance which finally forced the abandonment of "military communism" and the adoption of the New Economic Policy in the spring of 1921.

destination. It seemed to require an interminable time for trains to traverse the main line from Riga to Moscow, and the shipments that went eastward to the famine region were like shots in the dark that had a good chance of missing their mark entirely. By the end of October, the records show that of the cars containing A.R.A. supplies, shipped during the previous month, eleven per cent had not reached their destinations. In November, the non-arrivals had increased to fifteen per cent. In December, the number had taken the decided jump to twenty-three per cent, and by the end of January (1922), the number of these technically "missing" cars had reached thirty-five per cent, or over a third of the whole number shipped up to that time. Knowing that within a short time he would need five or six times the number of cars then in use, Haskell expanded his Traffic Division so that it included not merely the functions of such a department in a large commercial organization, but also many of those which under normal conditions are handled by the railway administration.

Side by side with the Soviet railway organization at the ports, the A.R.A. set up its own traffic section as a part of its port organization. Similarly at reshipment points, such as at Moscow and at the district centers in the famine zone, there were A.R.A. transport sections to check and follow up the activities of the railway. These transportation sections constituted the fingers of contact, by which the A.R.A. Traffic Division in Moscow counted the pulse of the movement of vital supplies. Subsequently, as will be shown, the A.R.A. was compelled to increase the number of its contacts by stationing its own traffic controllers at several division points, where train after train became stalled in an administrative clot, until the congestion threatened to cut off the flow of life-blood to the hungry districts. Curiously enough, the Soviet liaison officials, who had not objected to the establishment of the other traffic organizations, objected vigorously to the traffic controllers. This, however, did not prevent their being placed at the danger points of the system, where their services were invaluable.

Through its contacts thus established, the Traffic Division kept track not only of all shipments, i.e., solid A.R.A. trains,



but of every car, no matter how forwarded, which contained A.R.A. goods. Of the fifty odd thousand cars used by the A.R.A., the Traffic Division's records were absolutely complete for all but 28, or  $\frac{1}{8}$  of one per cent. It is an extraordinary achievement, and is responsible for the fact that many pounds of supplies, which otherwise might have become permanently "missing," ultimately reached the hungry for whom they had been given.

The following table shows why an active Traffic Division with careful records was necessary. It shows, also, that good records could not move trains. The column "In transit" includes, of course, cars actually moving towards destination, as well as those stalled, sidetracked, misdirected, and otherwise lost.

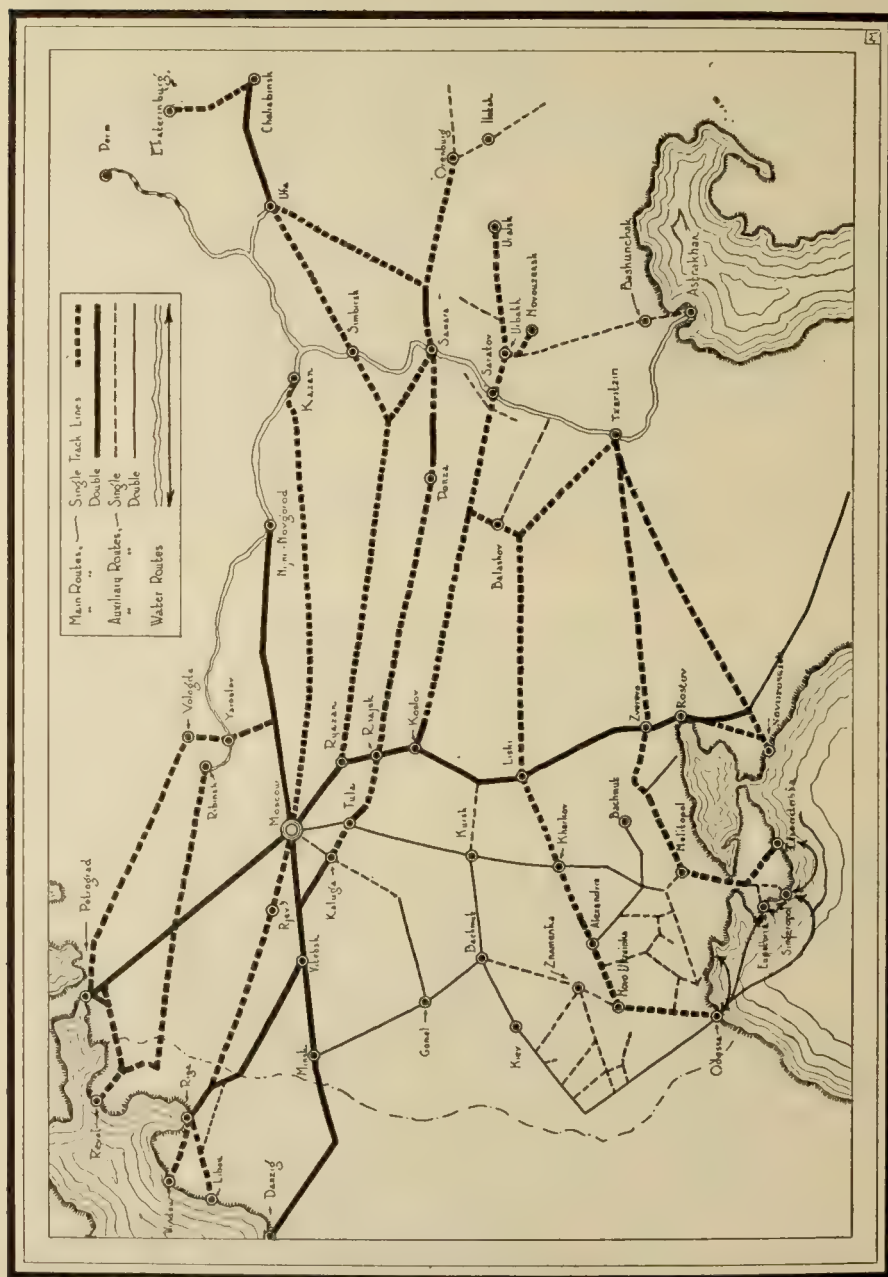
1921-1922	Cars Dispatched from Ports	Cars Arrived at Destination	In Transit at End of Month
August .....	50	0	50
September .....	408	378	80
October .....	962	888	154
November .....	836	758	232
December .....	1,159	931	460
January .....	1,521	1,029	952
February .....	1,734	827	1,859
March .....	8,585	1,760	8,684
April .....	5,710	7,197	7,197
May .....	7,846	8,210	6,833

By the middle of March, 1922, before A.R.A. controllers were placed at division points, the Traffic Division's records showed that 6,828 cars, loaded with over 100,000 tons of A.R.A. relief supplies, were on the rails, but where they were, whether they were moving, and when they would arrive, the Soviet railway administration could not say. Something had to be done. Unless the cars got through, feeding would stop, and unless the cars were unloaded, the port congestion would grow worse. The lines jammed somewhere. Quinn (Haskell's assistant), and Mathews (Traffic Chief), nagged Eiduk without denting his complacent assurance. Haskell tried repeatedly and vainly to see Kamenev to get action from higher up. Finally important news came, but not through regular channels.

One afternoon a Red soldier, hungry, filthy, and groggy with

exhaustion, came into the A.R.A. office at Kharkov. He was one, he said, of a squad of soldiers who weeks before had passed through that city, guarding a train of corn for the Volga. Alternately crawling and stopping, like an undecided beetle, the train finally brought them to Balashov, where they found a number of trains like their own already in the yards. There in Balashov their train stopped, and there it remained for three weeks, while train after train came on from behind, filling up the yards until the sidings up and down the line for miles were loaded with trains of corn, which nobody seemed able to move. The rations with which the soldier and his companions had started gave out, and seeing no hope of ever moving, or getting any food, the soldiers had elected this man to return to the A.R.A. office and report on their difficulties. This information, which went immediately over the wires to Moscow, was the first which the A.R.A. had received from anything resembling an official source, concerning the huge jam at Balashov.

Leave must not be taken of this soldier without a tribute to his dogged heroism. He and his companions were peasant lads, assigned by the military authorities to the unbelievably arduous duty of guarding the A.R.A. food trains over the long weary versts from the ports to the railheads. At best they were never sufficiently clothed for the savage weather of an unusually severe Russian winter, which invaded the filthy, decrepit box cars in which they rode. Moreover, the business of guarding the supplies in their keeping, as they passed through a country where everyone was hungry, was neither pleasant nor easy. Their greatest suffering, however, came from lack of food. The officials who sent them from the ports supplied them with rations for the number of days which the train would normally take to reach its destination. But no train ever reached its destination in that time. As soon, therefore, as the soldiers had consumed their supplies, having no money, they lived precariously in a country where no one had anything to spare. Many of these guards arrived at the A.R.A. District Transportation Offices in such serious condition that the telegraph wires to Moscow were hot with fiery messages from the American Supervisors, begging Colonel Haskell to





press the Soviet Government to accord more humane treatment to the men who performed this dangerous service.

No sooner had the news of the Balashov jam been confirmed, than reports came in of similar jams at Koslov and Penza.<sup>10</sup> Haskell acted. He sent American controllers to the congested division points, though Eiduk protested that this was quite unnecessary, as the situation was improving. He instructed the districts to establish traffic controls at the strategic points at Kharkov, Simbirsk, Rostov/Don, Saratov, Suizran, and Russaevka. Russians from the A.R.A. Traffic Division went to Yamburg on the Estonian-Russian border, to Gatchina, an important junction near Petrograd, and to Sebesch, on the Latvian frontier, where Lettish and Soviet railway officials had become so entangled in disputes that the Lettish Government was threatening to refuse further use of its cars.

The controllers at Koslov and Balashov found the jams so tight, the situation so confused, that a complete stoppage on these vital lines seemed inevitable. No preparations for the emergency had been made. The local officials lacked both energy and authority. There were no spare locomotives to replace those that suddenly went "sick." There was no fuel, not even green logs, with which to get up steam. Employees, hungry and unpaid, made more trouble. The first trains, like the logs at the beginning of a river jam, were held up by an obstruction, which could have been removed if promptly attended to. But the obstruction remained, until there were so many trains on the rails that nothing could move and the stream was effectually dammed. At Koslov, for example, on March 5, there were nine trains. (Trains averaged about thirty cars.) Had these nine, or some of them, been moved, and the channel kept open, all would have gone well. But eleven days later, the number of stalled trains had increased to 13. Five days later, on the 21st, it was 20. By April 3rd, 26, with 14 additional trains held up in the immediate vicinity. At Balashov, the jam piled up more rapidly. On March 5th there were eight trains in this station, and on the 16th, there were 22. On the 21st there were 42, but on the 22nd, 11 had

<sup>10</sup> These points, as well as Balashov, were not in the "famine zone" and hence were out of the administrative range of the A.R.A. districts.

been moved, and the number of stalled shipments was reduced to 31. Four days later, however, on the 26th, the number had gone up to 46, and the blockade was complete.

Confronted with the reports of A.R.A. controllers, Eiduk could no longer conceal the jam or deprecate its seriousness, but he went to the other extreme. The railways, he said, believed it impossible to move the trains through the blockade to the Volga; therefore he asked the A.R.A. to allow the food supplies to be unloaded into warehouses at the congested points, in order to relieve the jam and release empty cars for the ports. Haskell naturally objected to this solution, for corn stored in warehouses at Balashov and Koslov could save no lives in the gaunt villages beyond the Volga. Moreover, he realized that, once the corn was out of the cars and into warehouses, there was no telling when he would be able to get it back in cars again, and move it eastward. Eiduk then proposed to break the jam by sending trains away from the congested points in any direction, until the situation was cleared up. Haskell objected even more vigorously to this, for the confusion which would certainly have resulted from such a maneuver was appalling to think of, and it was at least reasonable to assume that, if the trains could be removed in all directions—except in the right one, they could, by proper management, be moved in the right direction also.

Letters, arguments, threats, and continuous nagging, both at the Center in Moscow, and at all points of contact throughout the transportation system, availed not at all in breaking the jam. Haskell finally, with grave misgivings, agreed that 1,100 cars should be unloaded temporarily into the warehouses at the points of congestion. But before this was put into effect other issues combined to precipitate a crisis which threatened to smash the whole relief program at the very moment of its gravest need.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE BREAKING POINT

#### ROUGH WEATHER

ONE cannot say how far the high hopes engendered by the approaching Genoa Conference affected Soviet policy towards the A.R.A. The willingness of the bourgeois governments to receive Russia almost as an equal was received by the Commissars with jubilation. The lesser lights of the Party—with whom the A.R.A. had largely to deal—interpreted Genoa as proof that western Europe, to save itself, had at last been forced to turn to Russia. Genoa confirmed a theory, widely held by Communists and others, that Europe could never pull itself out of the post-war mire without the help of Russia. Russia was emerging. No longer need she ask favors; hereafter, she could grant them. But there was one flaw in the picture. America, while giving relief more largely than other countries, held aloof from the Genoa negotiations and scrupulously avoided any sign of official intercourse with the Soviet régime.<sup>1</sup> The A.R.A. was the only American institution within reach upon which the irritated Commissars could vent their annoyance. Trotzky, in the course of a blatantly jingoistic speech (March 12, 1922), accused the A.R.A. of giving relief with one hand and subsidizing counter-revolution under Baron Wrangel with the other.<sup>2</sup> Kamenev, less publicly, but unmis-

<sup>1</sup> Secretary of State Hughes, in a note to the Italian Government, March 8, 1922, formally declined the invitation to be officially represented at Genoa.

<sup>2</sup> *Izvestia*, March 14, 1922. Trotzky's Red Army had defeated Wrangel, dispersed his army, and driven the remnants from the Crimea in November, 1920. The French at first cared for these refugees but later withdrew their support. In 1922 the A.R.A., along with the League of Nations, the American Red Cross, certain British societies and others, were giving relief to refugees from all parts of Russia then stranded in Constantinople. This was the extent of America's interest in Wrangel. (See Chapter XIX.) Trotzky may have had this in mind or he may have been improvising. At any rate he gave no details.



takably, tried to slap the United States over the back of the A.R.A. When Haskell, exasperated by the obstruction and bungling of Eiduk and his staff, asked that the A.R.A. be allowed to deal directly with the railway officers, Kamenev declined his request, observing that so long as the United States refused to recognize Soviet Russia, there was no possibility of the A.R.A. having freedom of action in its relief work.

Presently roars of protests came to Moscow from the Americans in the districts. First from one quarter, then from another, came the news of the summary arrest of Russians holding highly responsible positions in the A.R.A. In only two cases out of ten had the authorities kept their agreement to notify the A.R.A. of their intention to seize its employees. It looked like another assault to put control of the distribution in the hands of the Communist Party. It threatened to break by terror the morale of the distributing organization, to prevent, in other words, the delivery to the hungry of such food as got through the traffic jam. Pressure from Haskell finally got from Eiduk the explanation that his government was then engaged in rounding-up and clapping into jail all the members of the Social Revolutionary Party it could lay its hands on. If the A.R.A. had employed members of this party, it was unfortunate, but, famine or no famine, the safety of the revolution depended on having the Social Revolutionists under lock and key. Later on it was learned that this round-up was part of a final effort, which culminated in the trials of Social Revolutionists<sup>3</sup> in the summer of 1922, to crush utterly and forever the one party in Russia that seemed able, in spite of Communist power, to keep a tenuous hold on life. But to the men of the A.R.A., who never inquired whether their employees were Mensheviks, Communists, Anarchists, or Social Revolutionists, the affair was another example of Communist breach of agreement, another barrier to be hurdled in a job that was hard enough at best. And the A.R.A.'s troubles did not end with overloaded ports, railroad jams, and summary arrests.

<sup>3</sup> F. A. Mackenzie, who followed these trials, has given a dramatic account of them in his *Russia before Dawn*, 232-245.

## SEIZURE OF AMERICAN SUPPLIES: HASKELL'S ULTIMATUM

The most open and flagrant violation of the agreement with the A.R.A. came about when the Soviet officials faced the seemingly inevitable collapse of its whole transportation system. For more than a year the government had been increasingly delinquent in paying the wages due the railway employees. It steadily fell behind in its food payments to employees during 1921, and in January of 1922, there was a further reduction in supplies. According to the railway report <sup>4</sup> already referred to, in February the salaries on many of the roads had not yet been paid for the month of November. The salary, when received, amounted to only eight pounds of bread for a full month, but it was something. And now, from the railwaymen's point of view, the government, while refusing to supply them with food, was forcing them to transport enormous quantities of food for the benefit of other people. It was more than human nature could stand. The railwaymen demanded in unmistakable tones either their promised rations or a share in the famine supplies.

The government, though aware of this dangerous development, had been unable to meet it. In December (1921) Eiduk had approached the A.R.A. with the proposal that railway employees be included in the famine relief program. As an inducement, he suggested that this would undoubtedly speed up transportation. The A.R.A., while seeing the truth of that suggestion, could not agree to the proposal, for it would simply mean less food and more deaths in the famine districts, as the government was able to feed the railway people. In February (1922), however, the government came back with a similar request. By that time it seemed possible that the situation might get out of the hands of the Soviet officials, and bring about wholesale suspension of railway activities. Therefore Haskell agreed that a small amount of corn be loaned to the government to feed the railway workers, on condition, however, that the amount loaned should, within a reasonable time,

<sup>4</sup> In *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, March 3, 1922. F. A. Mackenzie, 226-231, describes the struggles of the workers to keep alive by speculation and extortion.

be replaced, and delivered in the famine area. The terms of the loan agreement were as follows: <sup>5</sup>

- (1.) That up to 4,500 tons of corn would be delivered solely for distribution to the employees of the railway, directly connected with the transport of food supplies to the famine area.
- (2.) That corn would be turned over to the railroads only at definite places agreed upon in each case in advance, and only in such amounts and at such time as discretion dictated, having in mind the feeding program and the arrival of cargoes at ports.
- (3.) That the Soviet Government would repay this loan within two months and to insure re-payment would deposit a gold security with the A.R.A. in London.

Eiduk, for the Soviet Government, accepted these terms, the Narkomprod (Commissariat of Food) assuming responsibility for replacement. Shortly afterwards he requested the A.R.A. to authorize an additional loan of four thousand tons under the same conditions. This, too, was done, and preliminary arrangements were made that the specified quantities of corn would be turned over to representatives of the railroads at the Baltic ports, at Novorossisk, and at Koslov.

Suddenly, the whole situation changed. There had been enough cases of violations of the Riga Agreement, but they had been, as it were, negative violations, in which the government had failed to do what it had promised. Now it was different. The government not only failed to do as it promised; it seemed to be doing, in a thorough and extensive fashion, what it had specifically and categorically agreed not to do. The A.R.A. headquarters in Moscow learned of this turn of affairs by a disturbing telegram from Dr. Walker, in charge of the A.R.A. work in Petrograd. Walker wired that the local railway officials had been authorized by Comrade Pinous, of Eiduk's office, to take over the first forty cars which arrived in Petrograd from Reval, the contents to be unloaded into the Transportation Coöperative Society's warehouses. Had the

<sup>5</sup> The terms of this agreement were stated in a letter, W. N. Haskell to A. Eiduk, No. 1109, March 4th, 1922, and were accepted by Eiduk in letters to Haskell, No. 2126, March 10th, and to Quinn, No. 2155, March 11th, 1922.



A.R.A. authorized this? At about the same time, Shafroth was wiring from Samara that local officials, on authorization from Moscow, had seized thirty-four A.R.A. cars at Russaevka, and had detached sixty-one cars from the A.R.A. trains at Penza and Balashov for railway employees. At none of these points had Haskell authorized any deliveries, and yet in each case representatives of the A.R.A. had copies of telegrams sent out from the Soviet railway administration, specifically directing the seizure of cars at these precise points. There was no question of a mistake; there was every evidence of a deliberate violation of an agreement. But much more important than the principle involved was the fact that every diversion meant more deaths among the peasants of the famine districts.

Haskell ordered all deliveries to the railroads stopped. He protested, loudly, continuously, but without effect. Eiduk was as impervious to protests as a mule to honeyed phrases, and Kamenev, when Haskell tried to reach him, sent word that he was so busy with political matters that Haskell would have to wait. Meanwhile Eiduk, to show his interest in the matter, sent Pinous to investigate the reputed seizures. Pinous reached Petrograd and immediately told the railways to go on with the good work and take eleven more cars. To more protests the only answer was an order from the railways to unload at Petrograd, daily, forty-four A.R.A. cars, billed to the Volga famine regions. Then another order directed that fifty-two cars, billed by the A.R.A. to Kazan, go instead to Ribinsk for storage, and that all subsequent shipments from Reval port, regardless of A.R.A. orders, go to the same point. The object of these orders was to get empty cars, which could be returned to Reval through which the Soviets, as well as the A.R.A., were shipping supplies. The railways took a similar action at Kosslov, before the A.R.A. had authorized any unloading at that point. Darragh, the A.R.A. controller there, protested to the limit of his vocabulary, and when he resisted the breaking of the American seals, was arrested by the Cheka.

Kamenev was still too busy with political matters to see Haskell. But Haskell had waited long enough. The hour had come for a showdown.

It was customary for the A.R.A. to send its important tele-

grams by courier to Riga and thence in code to London and New York. But the following telegram, addressed to Hoover, but in reality an ultimatum to the Communist Government, Haskell sent (April 10, 1922) *en clair* over the Soviet diplomatic wire. He said:

"For last two weeks attitude of Soviets has grown steadily more indifferent and disagreeable towards A.R.A. Less respect for terms of Riga Agreement. Now seizure American relief supplies, especially corn in transit, has begun. Forty cars from Reval under our seals diverted to Petrograd for railway workers. Fifty cars corn under our seals diverted at Balashov for railway workers. This diversion on telegraphic orders from railway authorities at Moscow. I have copy their telegrams. Eleven cars of corn taken at Penza same purpose. . . . Thirty-four cars taken Russaevka same purpose.

"Eiduk disavows all these actions and promises reloading with payment or replacement for any shortage. However, abuses continue and promises are only made to be broken.

"Meanwhile, for ten days I have tried without success to see Kamenev, his stated reason being too busy with politics. I have coöperated with Soviets fully to insure their seed arrivals, but they have been unappreciative and have sidetracked A.R.A. corn and failed to live up to the reduced demands agreed to by Krassin and myself, which are our minimum requirements children and necessary corn rations. Furthermore, priority of shipments guaranteed by Riga Agreement is ignored. Furthermore, railway authorities at Koslov have begun to unload 400 of our cars without authority and over protest our local representative.

"These acts of arbitrary interference and disrespect for our seals, plus the fact that although corn leaves ports rapidly it congests at junction points and does not arrive at Volga in sufficient quantities, leads me to seriously doubt the ability of Russian railways to deliver our program.

"I can positively recommend that not another pound of relief supplies should be added to our existing program. I recommend that all pending shipments from America be stopped beyond actual present commitments until such time as I can advise how present difficulties are met here and whether a sincere effort to coöperate with us manifests itself.

"No supplies should be collected in America above our

program because they could not be transported to the famine areas before harvest."

## PEACE CONFERENCES WITH KAMENEV

This message had scarcely reached the wire, when Eiduk telephoned Haskell that Kamenev was anxious to see him the next day. The telegram was an effective reagent. On the following afternoon, April 11, Kamenev found time not only to see Haskell, but to come to his office and for two hours and a half discuss with him the many items on the memorandum of grievances that had long been prepared for this session. Quinn, of the A.R.A., a secretary, and an interpreter, attended this conference. Eiduk was also present, and listened stolidly while his chief repudiated and condemned his recent acts.

Haskell brought up, first, the diversion and seizure of A.R.A. supplies. Kamenev regretted the incident and declared that, "In the name of the Soviet Government, I confirm that the Soviet Government has no right to requisition or to divert supplies sent by the A.R.A. The Soviet Government agrees not to violate these supplies, from their arrival at the ports to the time they get to consumers. They must arrive at destination with seals intact. In two days this statement will be confirmed by the highest power and will be published in all official papers." <sup>6</sup>

The second point discussed was the repeated and continuous failure of the railways to deliver the number of cars they had promised. Confronted with the figures of actual car deliveries, Kamenev said: "There is a criminal thing here, and I am surprised that Mr. Eiduk has let it go for ten days without taking severe steps. . . . This question should be put before our transportation people and within twenty-four hours they should reply, confirming this number of cars, or should really state the actual number of cars they can deliver at the present."

Haskell pointed out that the railroads had already been asked for this information, and had made a great many promises, none of which had been kept. "There is no use,"

\* This and subsequent quotations are from the secretary's notes of this meeting. These are more fully given by Sidney Brooks, "Russian Railroads in the National Crisis," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, No. XLII, 66-70.



continued the Colonel, "in bringing supplies into Russia, if they don't reach the starving." To this Kamenev replied that within twenty-four hours the railway officials would guarantee the number of cars they could furnish and would be obliged to fulfill the guarantee. When Haskell pointed out that he already had a guarantee in writing from Krassin, which was worthless, Kamenev declared emphatically that the failure to keep Krassin's agreement was a crime, that it should be investigated and the guilty should be punished.

"It is not a question of promises," said Haskell. "The only proof I have is the arrival of food in the Volga valley."

In the discussion of the present and future needs, as well as of the past performances, Haskell brought up the fact that in order to assist the seed program of the government, the A.R.A. had actually reduced its demands for empty cars below what was desired, but that as a result, the government had given practically all their cars to the seed movement,<sup>7</sup> giving the A.R.A. too few cars to make the continuation of its first program possible. That program required that two thousand tons of food for adults arrive in the Volga valley every day. Since the railroads failed to deliver this amount, the program faltered, which in terms of lives meant that there was a margin of misery and death between the number the A.R.A. was prepared to feed and the number the transport situation permitted it to reach. Haskell repeated that he wanted it clearly understood that for ten days the program had been falling more and more behind. During this time he had been trying to see Kamenev, for he had discovered to his sorrow that it was utterly useless to talk with any one else.

Kamenev said that to his regret he had absolutely no explanation of the failure of the railways to give the cars promised at that time. He then asked if it would have any significance if he could propose at that moment to supply two hundred and fifty cars a day.

"No particular significance," said Haskell, "because it is now time to go to four hundred and fifty cars per day. We

<sup>7</sup> A great part of the seed movement at this time consisted of purchases made by the A.R.A. for the Soviet Government from the \$12,000,000 appropriation.

have not been able for three weeks to get the two hundred and fifty daily promised." Kamenev then proposed a conference with the railroad people to find out exactly how many cars they could furnish and why they had failed to keep their promises. Haskell agreed to the conference, but added that he had not now the slightest interest in the explanations of the broken promises by the railways. What he was interested in from then on was what they could and would do in the future.

The discussion then came around to the lack of coöperation from Russian officials, particularly those in Eiduk's office. Kamenev admitted there was just cause for complaint and added: "I realize that some of them are not very friendly towards your organization." Kamenev even went so far as to say that if necessary he would discharge Eiduk's entire force. Haskell said that this was not necessary, but he did suggest the elimination of Pinous, Eiduk's representative, whom he regarded as a prime example of obstruction and inefficiency. Immediately Eiduk, who a few days before had stoutly defended Pinous, and had assumed responsibility for all his acts, announced that the matter was irrelevant, for the offending eye had been plucked out two days since. Furthermore, when questioned about the summary arrests in the districts, Eiduk replied that he had just issued orders that no one be arrested in the districts without his consent.

In bringing this remarkable conference to a close, Haskell emphasized, again, the necessity of tangible results. He realized the efforts that the government was making, but he was obliged to report facts as they were. To this Kamenev replied: "No one in the Russian Government doubts the humanitarian work being done under your direction. Everyone has absolute confidence in you. No one can have any doubts as to the earnest and sincere work that is done in Russia by the Americans."

To these flattering observations Haskell replied significantly: "I am following results, and the minute I get them, I will advise my people at home."

At the close of this meeting Haskell reported in full to Hoover. He sent the report over the open wire, as a reminder

to the Soviet Government that promises and apologies were not enough to cause a withdrawal of his recommendation for a suspension of the relief program.

"I have reached the point," he wired (April 11, 1922), "where plans and promises have little effect and distinctly advised Mr. Kamenev that from to-day the definite record of services rendered by Russian railways and accomplishments in fact were the only evidences acceptable to me from the Soviet Government. This entire situation is in an acute stage and I must have our demands met in fact and not in theory, before I change my recommendations regarding reduction of the Russian feeding program. You may be assured that our demands will be reasonable and all within the power of the Soviet Government to carry out."

And so ended an episode which was the turning point in A.R.A. relations with the Soviet Government. Had Kamenev been less flexible, had the affair been left in the hands of Eiduk, or of a die-hard Communist, there would have come a disaster. Had the violation of agreements not been whole-heartedly repudiated, the suspension of the A.R.A. program would have continued, and the reasons therefor published. There would have followed bitter controversy, and perhaps the wholesale seizure of American relief supplies. At any rate, the heavy price would have been paid by the hungry millions who, soon, with the swift mounting of the American feeding, found security from starvation in the sacks of golden corn.

But the break did not come, and this is due largely to Kamenev, who, bearing a double burden of responsibility and authority because of Lenin's illness, reversed the policy of the hard-shelled comrades. The discomfiture of the hard-shelled was, of course, neither permanent nor complete, but it served its purpose and on the whole was the beginning of a period of more cordial relations which endured until the A.R.A. withdrew. That Kamenev could swing Soviet policy to friendliness and observance of agreements was probably due to the circumstances of Haskell's ultimatum. Even the most bigoted Communist could realize the unpleasant possibilities of a sensational revelation of broken pledges at the



very moment when Soviet diplomats were doing their very best at the Genoa Conference to convince Western Europe of their reliability.

In quite a different respect is this incident remarkable. Communists in Russia, near-Communists, and others, in the United States delighted in accusing the A.R.A. of being in Russia not for relief, but for economic espionage, and in abusing Hoover as the arch-enemy of the proletarian state, stopping at nothing in his efforts to destroy the Soviet Government and discredit the Communist cause. It is doubtful if anyone ever had such a perfect weapon to injure the Soviet Government, as Haskell's telegram placed in Hoover's hand. Merely to publish it, without comment, would have loosed a wave of anti-Communist attack that would have washed away the pedestal of respectability that Soviet diplomacy was painfully building. Moreover, publication of this telegram would have effectively turned the tables on those who during these critical months had been accusing Hoover and the A.R.A. of misrepresenting the seriousness of the transport situation in order to reduce the volume of relief, and thereby injure Russia.<sup>8</sup> The telegram was never published, for the A.R.A. was engaged in the business of saving human life.

#### CONFERENCE WITH DJERJINSKY

The conference, suggested by Kamenev, with the railway officials was held on April 12 at the office of the chief of the railways, and was the beginning of a period of cordial and effective coöperation between the A.R.A. and the responsible heads of the Commissariat of Communications. In addition to Haskell, Quinn, Mathews, and Lehrs from the A.R.A., there were present besides Kamenev and Eiduk, Djerjinsky, who had recently taken over the Commissariat of Communications, Jukov, the technical head of the railways, Delgast, Djerjinsky's principal assistant, the Chief of the River Transport, and one or two other experts.<sup>9</sup> This was their first meeting with any

<sup>8</sup> Chapter X.

<sup>9</sup> The account of this meeting is based on the notes of J. A. Lehrs, Acting Chief of the A.R.A. Liaison Division, who acted as interpreter. For further details, see S. Brooks, *op. cit.*, 54-55, 70-71.

of the members of the A.R.A., all previous communications having been through Eiduk.

Djerjinsky was the man whose reputation, as the organizer of the Cheka, even more effective than the infamous Okhrana of the Czar, and as the director of the Red Terror, was comparable in legendary horror with that of Marat and St. Just. As far as was known, Djerjinsky's acquaintance with the administrative and operative technique of railways was limited to that of a casual passenger. He was neither an engineer, like Krassin, nor a man of affairs. By profession he was a revolutionist, and the greater part of his life had been spent either in avoiding the police, or in paying the penalty of having failed to do so. The A.R.A. found this legendary figure mild mannered, courteous, and soft-spoken. He lacked all the bluster and aggressive mannerisms which had deceived some of the A.R.A. men into believing that Eiduk was a man who could get results. Djerjinsky was apparently the antithesis of the traditional go-getter. Except for a calm imperturbability, there was nothing in his bearing to suggest the capable executive. What would have happened had this man been introduced to the officers and directors of the principal railways in America or Great Britain, as chosen to take over complete control of their administration, baffles the imagination. But this was Russia, and Russia of the Revolution, and hence the members of the A.R.A. most concerned with the transportation question found it satisfying to think that where others had failed, the man who had stamped out anarchy and disorder by terror might be able to terrorize the railways into greater usefulness.

The meeting was opened with the statement by Haskell of his difficulties. Kamenev followed, reiterating what he had said the day before, relative to the illegality of the acts committed by the railways and to the rights of priority and coöperation to which the A.R.A. was entitled. Djerjinsky then announced that he had sent out orders establishing the inviolability of the A.R.A. seals. He explained that the diversion of corn evidently occurred through a misunderstanding, as he had asked, through Eiduk, for corn for the railway workers, and had understood that the arrangements for its delivery had been satisfactorily concluded. He, apparently, knew nothing of agreements, and

this statement again seemed to indicate that the chief responsibility for their violations rested on Eiduk's office. On the subject of the failure of the railroads to keep their schedule, Djerjinsky pleaded the severity of the weather and failure of the Latvian railroads to handle their end of the operation. Jukov, the technical head of the railways, then gave a summary of the situation at that moment. Some of the figures that he gave are interesting, as indicating what the railways were trying to do at that moment, and the jam that then existed. Of the A.R.A. corn shipments, 9,414 cars had then been shipped from the ports and only 2,454 had reached the destination. At that moment there were 208 corn trains in transit. Fifty-six trains were then stalled at Balashov, where they were able to move only two trains a day. But as the average arrival was two trains a day, there was no hope of breaking the jam there, unless cars were unloaded at that point. At that moment the Soviet Government was transporting to Volga points 160 trains of seed grain and 170 trains of potato seeds.

In conclusion Jukov said that the 250 cars for the A.R.A. promised by Krassin were out of question, and that the best they could do was 160 cars from port to destination. He recommended that the A.R.A. ship childfeeding supplies coming from Riga to Nijni-Novgorod for storage, until the Volga opened, but Haskell declined to accede to this, pointing out that with the river frozen, food at Nijni-Novgorod would keep no children alive in the Volga valley. In the course of the discussion, Haskell insisted that hereafter dealings must be direct between the A.R.A. and the railway officials, and to this Djerjinsky and Kamenev agreed. Thus was established direct dealing with the highest departmental officials, an arrangement which, a few weeks before, might have prevented the whole crisis, but which Kamenev had then declared impossible, because of the refusal of the United States to recognize the Soviet Government.

Subsequently, on every Wednesday until the transportation situation had cleared up, the A.R.A. officials met Djerjinsky and his experts and thrashed out the difficulties of the week. It gave great pleasure to the A.R.A. men to notice that, whenever the railway experts were asked to state the number of



cars they could provide at a certain point and at a given time, Djerjinsky always warned his men to promise only what they were absolutely sure they could carry out. The absolute reliability of all the information secured from the railways under Djerjinsky's administration, no less than the improvement in the service, won the admiration of the A.R.A. traffic men for the new railway chief.

In spite of the improved relations and the evident good intentions of the railway administration, Haskell did not at once withdraw his recommendation that no further supplies be shipped into Russia. With so much at stake he required more than good intentions and a friendly spirit. Within two weeks, however, the railways had demonstrated, under the new régime, that enough food to maintain the program would be delivered to the Volga in time to be of use before the harvest. Haskell, therefore, on April 27, cabled Hoover that,

"Soviet railways now making every effort [to] coöperate [in the] delivery of program and are fulfilling their guarantees. Transport situation now satisfactory and with increases promised will carry our program as originally planned. Therefore recommend resumption purchases and shipments according to schedules. I am glad to report that general coöperation Soviet authorities has materially improved during the last two weeks in meeting our requirements of control, inspection, et cetera. I hope and believe that a better understanding now exists, that an attitude friendly to our work will be maintained and necessary assistance given."

The sending of this telegram ended the most serious crisis of the relief operation. It was a crisis caused, as has been shown, primarily by the breakdown of transport, and complicated by some high-handed activity of a few Communists. The physical breakdown of the railways was a matter of deterioration over a number of years for which others besides the Communists were partly responsible. The collapse of administrative efficiency, the inefficiency and indifference of operating personnel, can be very largely attributed to Communist economic policies, principally the attempt to militarize the railway system. It was like an attempt by the Communists

to apply the system that Pharaoh employed, with indifferent success, with the Israelites. Unquestionably, the railway laborers and railroad administrative officials were guilty of sabotage during the period of military Communism, but who can blame them? There are limits to the oppression of labor, even under a proletarian dictatorship. The achievements of Djerjinsky consisted not alone in reëstablishing discipline, which might have been expected from one in his position and wielding his power. More remarkable and of greater value to the railways and to Russia was his success in enlisting the sincere coöperation of the technical experts, who previously had been antagonized by attempts to force them to give their energies to a system which they detested and distrusted. The success of the railways in emerging from the crisis of March and April was the beginning of the development of an *esprit de corps*, which had been unknown since the beginning of the disintegration of Russia in the early days of the World War. The part which the American relief program played in the revival of this vital organ of Russian life has been attested to by many of those in a position to know. To say, as did one writer <sup>10</sup> "that the corn loan to the railways did more to save the Soviet Government than anything else during the last four years," is putting it a bit strong. But the corn <sup>11</sup> turned over by agreement, plus that which was seized and distributed to the railwaymen, undoubtedly did prevent a series of labor troubles, particularly on the lines serving the famine areas, which might have had serious effects not only in the field of relief, costing many lives, but in politics as well. But of greater importance was the steadily increasing pressure from the A.R.A., which forced the Communists to prune and cut away the choking, parasitic bureaucracy that strangled the system. For the first time since the Revolution here was an organization, with a

<sup>10</sup> *Chicago Tribune*, Paris Edition, July 24, 1922.

<sup>11</sup> The Soviet Government eventually paid the corn loan, but it took many months to get a settlement. The Narkomprod, which made the contract, had no corn, and insisted that the Narkomzen supply the replacement. This the latter refused to do, on the ground that it was not required to fulfill any promise made by another department of the Soviet Government. Towards the end of 1922 a final settlement was completed. In the meantime as the Soviet Government had failed to repay in kind, the A.R.A. took the gold deposit and purchased new supplies to replace those gone to the railways.

difficult task to perform, with a definite plan of doing it, and with a dogged insistence that the plan be carried out. Gradually the railways were forced, by the hounding of the A.R.A., and later by the insistence of Djerjinsky, to establish *poriadok*—a systematic and orderly way of doing things, which, as Russians were fond of saying, had been banished by the Revolution.

By this small margin did the A.R.A. program escape disaster, and thus narrowly did the millions whose lives depended on it escape death. One must not assume, however, that there were no more troubles with supply and transport, that in some miraculous way sick cars and locomotives were made whole and new rails and cross-ties materialized from the ambient air. With the able and willing coöperation of Djerjinsky and his men, the American food continued week by week to reach new thousands of hungry households. But the transport system never, until harvest was at hand, caught up with the supplies which A.R.A. ships were discharging at the ports. At the very moment Haskell sent his optimistic telegram, there were 65,000 tons of A.R.A. supplies stored on the docks in the Baltic and Black Seas waiting railway cars. During the weeks that followed until August this excess over the capacity of inland transport remained, reduced somewhat, but still formidable, as is shown in the table on page 174. The meaning of this is that under the conditions then obtaining no more food from abroad could have reached the starving than did reach them, for during all these critical months there was continuously more A.R.A. food at the ports than the railways could take away.

### RIVER TRANSPORT

An important factor in easing the problem of the A.R.A. in maintaining an ever increasing flow of supplies was the river transport, which became available when the ice went out of the Volga, during the last days of April.<sup>12</sup> In former years, Russia's rivers and canals had borne one-third of the country's freight, but the same factors of neglect, mismanagement, and destruc-

<sup>12</sup> First shipment from Tzaritzin was made on May 4; from Rybinsk, May 11.



tion had taken toll of this, as of all other branches of the country's economic equipment. The effective river fleet, by 1921, had been reduced from four thousand steamers to less than two thousand, and the barges, which represented easier prey to the fuel hunters and destroyers of property in the days of disorder, had been reduced from twenty-five thousand to five thousand five hundred.<sup>13</sup> Many of the barges, which were not broken up and carried away for fuel, had been left to be broken up by the ice, or carried down stream by the spring floods, since in the midst of revolution there was neither time nor inclination to pay attention to what belonged to everyone and to no one in particular.

Djerjinsky applied the same energy in preparing the river fleet that he had in reviving the railroads. He ordered barges, tugs, and steamers at Rybinsk and Nijni-Novgorod on the upper Volga, and at Tzaritzin on the lower Volga, to take over the stores that had been concentrated at these points. As soon as the ice broke, the Americans in charge of the transshipment began energetically to move their products, utilizing every sort of craft, from passenger steamers, which formerly were famous in Russia and Europe for their splendid appointments, to wooden barges, patched up and made seaworthy, under the direction of the A.R.A. representative. From Rybinsk and from Nijni-Novgorod, the food went in steamers, which bore their cargoes to Kazan, to Simbirsk, to Samara, and even to Saratov on the Volga, a distance in some cases over 1,100 miles. Other craft, starting from the same points, steamed down the Volga, and then up the Kama as far as Perm, over a thousand miles. Others, going down the Volga and up the Kama, then ascended the Bielaya into the interior of the Bashkir Republic, a district without railroads, and with approaches by water during only a few months of the year, when the Bielaya is in flood. From the large river points mentioned, the food was reshipped in many cases to village landings along the river. In the Kazan District there were, for example, eight such landings on the Volga, and others on the Kama. There were five in Simbirsk, six in Samara, eight north

<sup>13</sup> S. Brooks, *op. cit.*, 74, who secured the figures from the Commissariat of Communications.

and south of Saratov, four near Tzaritzin, five on the Bielaya near Ufa, others on the Uralsk River, running south to the Caspian Sea, and others on the Volga between Tzaritzin and Astrakhan.

## CHAPTER IX

### DISTRIBUTING THE CORN

#### DISTRICT TRANSPORT

THE two preceding chapters have discussed two phases of the transport problem: first, ports and cars; second, administration and coöperation. Now we come to the third phase, from railhead to village, the stage of actual distribution. The men on the front line in the districts were unable, of course, to realize, as did Haskell and others in Moscow, how matters stood in regard to the whole organization, but as everything seemed to conspire to make more difficulties, as the railways failed, and promised food did not appear, the district men were confronted with the terrible possibility of being obliged to close kitchens which alone stood between thousands of children and death.

Their worries began when winter closed on the steppes in white silence, and grew as the days passed and the trains bearing the food for the growing number of hungry were longer and longer delayed. The freeze-up of the Baltic was the first hard blow. Shiploads of childfeeding supplies, which were scheduled for distribution in February and March, were held for days, locked in the ice of the Kiel Canal, or failed to make their ports because of the hazards of navigation in an ice-choked sea. But it was the days and weeks lost while freight trains crawled feebly from point to point with the supplies actually landed, that made the men in the districts most frantic. Telegrams from overworked District Supervisors were showering upon the Moscow headquarters. "Rush food shipments to this district," wired one. "Unless food arrives, and arrives in abundant quantities, I can see where ninety per cent of all our kitchens will close." From another came the following: "I am sick in mind, body, and soul whenever I think of the



inevitable result of the delay in shipments." Those who were not confronted with the ghastly possibility of closed kitchens were distressed over their inability to maintain the rate of increase in their program that they had announced to the Russian people. In many districts the peasants said there were two kinds of promises: the "Amerikanski," and the "Sovietski." And so there were such messages as this: "We must have food. People are beginning to class the A.R.A. with other makers of promises."

Moscow headquarters, however, though it might unravel administrative tangles, could not clear away the snow that blocked the tracks or find fuel for locomotives. Shipments from Moscow to Kazan, a distance of 490 miles, took nineteen days, and even then never arrived complete. In one instance eighteen of the original thirty-two cars were missing. An American started out from Kazan to round up the lost cars. He went to within five versts of Moscow, where he found the first of the missing. Proceeding along the line he gradually found the others, some side-tracked on account of hot boxes and forgotten, and others merely forgotten. Other districts suffered in the same way. Shafroth at Samara reported in the middle of February that the last shipment from Moscow had taken ten days to cover the 654 miles, and even at that snail's pace had managed to lose, en route, seventeen out of thirty-eight cars. The previous shipment had been eighteen days en route. These things happened on main lines.

On secondary lines matters were much worse, both as regards operation and administration. Over one such secondary line during two winter months six shipments were made. Three of these shipments, convoyed by an American, reached destination in three, two, and four days respectively. The other three, handled by the railroad officials without an American convoy, reached destination in *ten*, *thirty-one*, and *twenty-three* days. Passenger traffic, which, as far as the A.R.A. was concerned, was important principally as an index of the condition of the lines, was in the remote regions entirely discontinued. Passenger trains to Tashkent were delayed anywhere from four days to a week and there were grisly stories, which might well have been true, of trains stalled in the snow, until the ill clad,

half starved passengers died of the cold. The A.R.A. Orenburg District, on the Tashkent line, suffered particularly. For eighteen days in the month of February, no train of any description entered or departed from the Orenburg station. Then followed a day when a train with one car of A.R.A. supplies crept in. Then winter closed down again, and there were no more trains for two weeks. In a district like Orenburg, where there were such difficulties in getting supplies into the town most favorably situated, the troubles of the A.R.A. in getting food to the smaller towns and villages can be well imagined.

In the A.R.A. Saratov District, the supply base was at Pokrovsk, on the east side of the Volga, directly across from the city of Saratov. From Pokrovsk, there were railway lines in three directions, serving theoretically the areas covered by A.R.A. operations, but in January in the Pokrovsk railway yards, there was only one locomotive, and the shifting of A.R.A. cars was done by camel power. The condition of the three railway lines from Pokrovsk is indicated by the fact that it took as long as seventeen days for trains to get to Pugatchev, a distance of less than one hundred and fifty miles. There was such an acute fuel shortage on the Ryazan-Uralsk line that the Soviets notified the British, who like the Americans were using these roads, that wood and mazout would be given priority over famine supplies. In Uralsk, one of the A.R.A. outposts situated far out on the edge of the Kirghiz steppes, and at the end of one of the lines from Pokrovsk, the time came during January when the A.R.A. food supplies were practically exhausted. Clapp, the lone American who was handling affairs in that section, knew that thirteen cars had been shipped to him several days before, but had not been heard from. Things reached the pass when it was a matter of a few days until the kitchens must close. This was a desperate moment, not only for the American, but for the whole gubernia, since the thin stream of American food was the margin which separated the people from starvation. The gubernial Ispolkom called a meeting and, to the accompaniment of many speeches, its solemn, bearded members explored all the possibilities of bringing in the missing cars. The local manager of the railways confessed that he could do nothing, for there was no fuel,

and if there was, the engines were so badly out of repair that they could not run. The railway workers, moreover, had received neither pay nor ration for weeks, and many of them were actually starving. Finally, the officials turned to Clapp. The only hope, they said, was that he should go to the Commander of the Red Army armored train, then in the station, and persuade him to go to Pokrovsk to pick up the missing cars. Clapp went, won the Commander to this scheme, and, as soon as it could get up steam, the armored train, with Clapp aboard, was clanking along toward Pokrovsk. In due time, at an obscure way station, they found the missing supply cars, which had been stalled for five days, and returned to Uralsk, to find the city kitchens reduced to issuing a ration of bread alone, while peasant delegates from the villages were arriving for a new allotment of supplies to keep the village kitchens going.

#### PREPARATIONS

The conditions that have been sketched above obtained before the corn, bought with the money appropriated by Congress for adult feeding, began to break through the jam at the ports and railway division points. Once the movement got under way, the districts were warned that the corn would come in an enormous flood, and so late in the year that the most strenuous efforts would be needed to distribute it before the spring break-up of the roads. The American district workers, therefore, made preparations long in advance for the rapid handling and dispatch of the corn to the villages. These included not only plans worked out with local officials, but such improvement of physical facilities as was possible, and the mobilization of every type of motive power within reach. At Kazan, for example, the corn schedule called for the arrival of fifteen hundred cars within a short period. Their contents had to be unloaded in warehouses, or transshipped to barges for delivery to the cantonal stations along the Volga and Kama rivers. The mere matter of unloading was a staggering problem to the local officials. The best they could do, they told Wahren, the District Supervisor, was to unload fifty cars a day, which would have meant a whole month consumed in



unloading alone. Boyd, who was in charge of transportation in this district, set to work on his own account, mobilized a force of six hundred refugees, paid them with food, and succeeded in unloading at the rate of one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty cars per day. At Kazan, also, a long delay in distribution seemed inevitable, because there was no means of transporting the corn from the railway yards to the river wharf, except by peasant carts. There were but few carts and horses, and what few there were, were needed for other purposes. The Americans insisted that the only solution was to lay a spur track from the yards to the wharf. All Kazan recognized that such a spur had always been needed, always would be needed, and would save many lives in this time of emergency. Finally, the officials agreed to let the job be attempted, with the result that the spur track was laid in time to carry over eight hundred cars of American supplies.

The city of Orsk, in the Orenburg district on the very edge of Asia, was accessible by a doubtful railway, which wandered uncertainly in the direction of the town and finally stopped in despair at the bank of the Ural river four miles away. There was no bridge across the river, and it appeared that the A.R.A. products must be put across on a decrepit ferry, which, taking into consideration the time used in loading, crossing, unloading and returning, plus what was used in argument, could make one trip in about two hours. It accommodated only four two-horse carts at a time. As the program required the unloading of at least three freight cars a day into at least one hundred and fifty carts, something had to be done. Nearly every one in this area was half starved; the officials had no means and were peasants, inexperienced in administration; nevertheless, they agreed to follow up the suggestion of Buckley, the A.R.A. representative, that a bridge be built. All the able-bodied, and even such half-starved people in the vicinity as were able to do manual work, were mobilized and fed by the A.R.A., and by a mighty effort a bridge of sorts was thrown across the river within a space of four days, in time to handle expeditiously the corn when it arrived.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> H. R. Buckley, "Relief in the Kirghiz Republic," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXII, 15-22.

The final stage of the journey of the corn to the consumers presented as many difficulties as did any of the intermediate steps. Russia has always had fewer draft animals than the country required, and the famine had disastrously reduced this inadequate number. Of the 33,000,000 horses of pre-war times only about 17,500,000 remained in 1921, with the most acute shortage in the hungry districts where at this moment horses were most badly needed.<sup>2</sup> For those horses which did remain, there was no forage to keep them in strength or even alive. These remaining horses, moreover, were in the hands of the richer peasants and, except in the districts where feeding reached practically one hundred per cent of the population, it was these richer peasants who received the least benefit from relief. The use of their horses for hauling supplies, therefore, was not always easily secured, especially since the authorities had no funds with which to pay for them. This problem was, however, like the others not insuperable. In the worst districts, the feeding came practically to include everyone, and even the owners of the horses were more than likely to need the food. The central government, also, through the A.R.A. and through the Nansen Mission, purchased oats, which were sent out to the districts, and used in payment for animal transportation. For the same purpose, the central government sent out funds to its representatives with the A.R.A. to meet such charges and, wherever the representatives were reasonably honest and interested in famine relief, those funds were used effectively for this purpose.

Among the many heroes of the Russian famine should be included the Russian camels, which, as an admiring American declared, were able to survive and flourish on such fodder as cockle burrs, cactus, and thistle. That same toughness which allowed them to eat such fodder, served no doubt to prolong their lives in another way, for camel-steak, according to the A.R.A. men on occasion obliged to eat it, was several degrees less palatable than horse meat.

The loads which the weakened horses and camels and half-starved men and women had to bear were not lightened by

<sup>2</sup>Lincoln Hutchinson, "Food Conditions in Russia," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, No. XXXVIII, 12.

the condition of the roads they were compelled to follow, for Russian roads rank among the worst in the world. Among the factors which contributed to the backwardness of Russia in road construction were the character of the soil, the lack of stone in the building, and the severity of the climate. The official statement that there are over three hundred thousand miles of roads in European Russia gives no adequate idea of the lack of highways in that country, for what are there described as roads would be so described in no other land. Less than three per cent of the so-called Russian roads are "improved." The majority are dusty zigzag routes, wavering across the steppes, with none of the attributes of a road, except a beginning and an end. There are, in some parts of the country, military roads, the "*chaussées*," which are surfaced with cobblestones and consequently so rough that even a Russian peasant, who can sleep on his cart under almost any circumstances, slumbers fitfully as he drives along. The *chaussées*, therefore, serve principally as brilliant examples of what a road should not be, and as guides to the wagon tracks which the peasants have made on either side. The best time for travel, and for the movement of freight across country, is in winter, when the severity of weather is offset by a more direct track across the snow, and the greater mobility of sledges. It was for this reason that the A.R.A. made tremendous efforts to have the corn reach the railheads before winter broke, for in Russia there seems to be no period of gradual change from winter to spring. The cold weather stops; then come a few hot days; the snow melts; and the whole country becomes a sea of black, tenacious mud, which for a period of two weeks or a month holds up communication as effectively as an inundation.

#### THE ARRIVAL OF THE CORN

The bringing of the corn to the villages is chiefly a tale of peasant fortitude. Those peasant qualities which in the past have made Russian armies strong in battle, revived and, under American and native leadership, brought victory under conditions as formidable as war.

By the time the first trainload of corn had tediously crossed



the windswept miles between Theodosia on the Black Sea and the city of Kazan, the roads through the Tartar Republic were already beginning to break up. The chances of delivering the corn to the villages before land communication became impossible seemed slight indeed, for there is only one railroad in the Republic, along its northern border, and the rivers, which serve as the principal means of communication, were still frozen. The cantons<sup>3</sup> selected to receive their allotment of corn from the first shipment, Spassk and Elabuga, were chosen both because of their great need and their perfected arrangements for handling the supplies.<sup>4</sup>

For Elabuga, twenty-six of the thirty-seven cars in the first shipment were sent out immediately, with a special engine under convoy of an A.R.A. agent, to Viatsky Poliany, where the train arrived three days later to find 1,750 sledges, mobilized by the cantonal committee to carry its precious contents to the villages. Plans worked without a hitch, so that within six days after the corn reached the territory of the Tartar Republic, it was being eaten by starving peasants in villages 250 versts from the railhead.

The plan for the distribution in Spassk, which lies at the other end of the Republic from Elabuga, was not so successfully accomplished. The chairman of the A.R.A. committee in the canton had given assurance that he could send 3,250 sledges to Kazan, the number necessary to transport the whole allotment of 48,750 poods. When notified that corn was arriving and that his sledges should be on their way, the committee chairman replied that he had been able to mobilize only eight hundred sleighs, but that these were coming. In the meantime, the sudden warm weather filled ravines with rushing torrents and made the crossing of the Kama, a very considerable river near Spassk, a hazardous undertaking. Of the original eight hundred sledges, only one hundred and ten were able to get through, and thus instead of the 48,750 poods, it was possible to deliver only 1,500 poods to this canton at this time, and even this was accomplished only after the loss of four

<sup>3</sup> The major subdivisions of the Tartar Republic, called cantons, correspond to the volosts of the gubernias.

<sup>4</sup> The story of the Kazan distribution is more fully described by J. Rives Childs, "A Year's Work in Kazan," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXII, 33-39.

men, who perished with their horses during the dangerous crossing of the Kama.

The A.R.A. Mission in Kazan did not, of course, allow the rations which Spassk canton could not deliver to lie in the warehouses until conditions improved. As soon as it was known that the originally scheduled number of sledges could not come from Spassk, word was sent to the canton of Laishev, from which horses and men on foot started out with all speed to bring the supplies. Even after the roads became impassable, the peasants, both men and women, continued to arrive at the distributing points, a whole village at a time, so that within ten days' time the whole allotment of 46,500 poods was distributed.

The second shipment to the Kazan district, consisting of a train of forty-two cars, arrived just in time to permit distribution in the remaining cantons before the roads became impassable. From Svaijsk, 3,225 horses and sledges carried the allotted 43,000 rations through the melting snow and across the rising floods, until the job was done, although in doing it, more than a dozen peasants were reported to have perished as they crossed the rising streams. Thus within ten days, with the employment of 7,300 men and horses, exclusive of the 12,000 persons who carried corn on their backs, over 109,000 poods, that is, over 1,800 tons, were distributed to villages far and wide in an area forced to rely almost entirely on the desperately heroic efforts of men and animals weakened by hunger.

As soon as the navigation season opened, the transportation problems of the Kazan district became relatively simple. The courses of the Volga, Kama, Viatka, and Bielaya rivers provided ways for reaching the most distant cantons, so that wagon transport was rarely more than a hundred versts from a steamer landing, and within a period of three weeks, the number receiving American corn jumped from 165,000 to over half a million in this district alone.

Off to the east of the Volga, down towards the Caspian Sea, in the Uralsk region of the Saratov District, there were not so many people to reach as in some other sections, but they were just as hungry and even less accessible. The corn reached Uralsk on Good Friday, at the beginning of the greatest of Russian festivals, Easter. The police, provided with lists from

the A.R.A., went through the city, notifying the people who were to be fed to go to the A.R.A. office for their authorizing paper, and then to the railroad yards. There was a steady procession of people going to the cars for their corn, and coming away with it in bags on their backs. Within an hour the little grain windmills of the city, long silent, were in gear and creakingly at work. Flour in the market dropped from eleven million roubles to four million a pood before evening. New hope lighted the faces of people, so long standing in the shadow of death. What promised to be the most ghastly and tragic Easter season became, within a few hours, a real manifestation of the spirit of rebirth, which Easter, like its pagan predecessor, celebrates. Weakened men and women, rescued miraculously it seemed to them, from death, broke down and wept as they knelt in the shadow of the railway cars, to thank God for their deliverance.

While the people of the city were drawing their allotment of corn, across the river on the broad steppes, there was growing a noisy congregation of thousands of carts drawn by horses, camels, and cattle, which came from tiny villages, two to four hundred miles distant, whence they had been summoned by runners from the city. One delegation of twelve men had arrived from Kalmikov, where they heard that corn was to be distributed at Jimbeta. But at Jimbeta, reached after traveling weary days over a distance of three hundred and sixty-five miles, they learned that the corn was not there, but at Uralsk, seventy-five miles farther on. Remembering the terrible need of those from whom they came, they urged on their animals and their own tired bodies over the heavy miles to Uralsk. There, indeed, was the corn of which they had heard in their village four hundred miles away. But there was no time to celebrate their good fortune, or to rest, for time meant lives. Thus the dawn after their arrival saw these weary pilgrims crossing the river to the American warehouses, to receive the allotment of their volost. The convoys left with the corn in sacks slung over the back of the camels. Carts would have made an impossible incumbrance, and, as it was, the camels would have to swim many streams, but the corn, the drivers were sure, would be safely delivered.



In more fortunate areas, special trains went along the rickety railway lines, stopping at villages to which the peasants had been warned to come with their carts and their feeding lists. An American who supervised this, tells of one place where they mobilized twenty persons—all who could read and write in the town—and enrolled them as clerks to write and register orders. The local military force was called out to keep the people in line as they registered. At first, as the lines of peasants passed the cars, they tramped through mud, but it was soon dried up by the pressure of many feet. Each recipient of corn carried away a duplicate receipt bearing the inscription "free American corn." A change came over the whole community as the lines passed the car where the peasants received the corn and started in diverse directions towards their villages. The Easter bells were ringing. One group of men and women, before they set out on their long march to their homes, sought out the American to tell him that they and their neighbors would thereafter always associate the ringing of Easter bells with the yellow American corn, which came at that season to rescue them from death.<sup>5</sup>

Up the Volga at Simbirsk, more than three thousand horses and sledges from hundreds of villages were gathered about the tracks and warehouses, when the first train of forty-three cars reached this district after nearly a month from the Black Sea. The peasants who had come in to take delivery of the corn were saying that within a week it would have been necessary for most of their neighbors to kill the horses that remained, in order that they might themselves live. Had this happened, the difficulties of getting the food from the railways to the starving would have been insurmountable. Fortunately for Simbirsk, this did not happen, and in addition to the American corn for the adults, there arrived at the same time large quantities of children's supplies which had been delayed by the Baltic freeze up, as well as seed from the government, and forage for the animals.<sup>6</sup>

In Melekes, the American in charge watched the distribution

<sup>5</sup> J. P. Gregg, "General Report, Saratov District, October, 1921-June, 1923."

<sup>6</sup> The Simbirsk story is told by James Somerville, Jr., "Simbirsk General Report."

of corn to four races: Russians, Tartars, Mordvas, and Kal-mucks. Here a mill had been taken over for the occasion, and was operated day and night, so that the corn was distributed as flour to the delegates. The chairman of the Committee of Novo Maina made a special journey to tell the American that the corn had saved the lives of fifteen thousand people in his volost. When the wagons came within sight of the village, he said, every one who was able to walk went out to meet them, people so hungry that they could not walk, dragging themselves after the others. And, as the convoy passed on to the village, all the people knelt, crossed themselves, and thanked God for the deliverance which had come to them. From another remote place, the peasants came to the Russian in charge of the distribution and asked if they could see one of the Americans who were bringing the corn, for, they said, "These Americans must have been sent from God, because otherwise they would not have been able to find such small villages in such a vast and far away country." <sup>7</sup>

On the lower Volga at Tzaritzin, the corn arrived earlier than at the northern points, while the ice was still on the Volga. Before the distribution had been completed, however, the ice began to break, but the sending of loads across the river was not stopped. When it became unsafe for horses, as it soon did, men volunteered to take the supplies over on hand sleds, which they pushed in front of them with long poles, in order not to have too much weight in one place on the thin ice. <sup>8</sup>

In Orenburg, it is the custom each year for the authorities to take down the river bridges just before the ice goes out, to prevent their being swept away by the floods. Without warning to the A.R.A. and just as the corn supplies began to come into Orenburg, the officials took down the bridge over the Sakmarskaya river, cutting the only means of communication with the Bashkir Republic. The ice, which was hourly expected to break up, would still bear the weight of a considerable load, and this offered the only hope of saving the Bashkirs. Word

<sup>7</sup> Henry C. Wolfe, "Arrival of the First Corn in Melekes, Samara," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXVI, 12-14.

<sup>8</sup> Patrick S. Verdon, "Review A.R.A. Activities, Tzaritzin District, First Period."

was sent out by runners to as many villages as could be reached, that every available means of transport must be mobilized at once. The next day the tracks leading to the bridge from all directions were moving with sleds drawn by camels, by oxen, by shaggy Bashkir ponies, accompanied by groups of men and women with sacks, who were prepared to carry their supplies on their shoulders. Sufficient corn was put across the river—and without the loss of a single load or a single life—for the Bashkir villages to carry on until the communications were opened again.<sup>9</sup>

It would be interesting to know exactly how many hundreds of tons of the precious corn were borne painfully, but as carefully as a priceless treasure, on the backs of men, women and children, trudging desperately through snow and mud. The amount would be prodigious. It would show, more strikingly perhaps than anything else, how much, how effectively these stolid peasants contributed to the saving of their communities. And the peasants were not alone in heroism. When help really came, there was in the great decisive struggle against hunger a greater degree of coöperation, of unity in a common cause, than the Russian towns had known for many years; greater, perhaps, than they had ever known. Under the leadership of politically disinterested foreigners, men of all classes could and did join in the accomplishment of a supremely arduous task.

#### STRIKING CHANGES IN THE SITUATION

In these early days of April, the corn for adults, provided for by the Congress only three months before, was reaching critical points in the famine zone, though in comparatively small quantities, and adult feeding on a small scale began in places as remote from the seaboard as Cheliabinsk and Zlatoust in the A.R.A. Ufa-Ural district, at about the same time as in the more accessible localities of Samara, Saratov, and Tzaritzin. At this time, of course, owing to the transportation difficulties, the corn was not arriving in sufficient quantities, or with sufficient regularity to permit rapid expansion of feed-

<sup>9</sup>W. H. A. Coleman, "The A.R.A. in Orenburg," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXIV, 9-22.



ing. This was not possible until the flow became regular and dependable, after the effects of the historic conferences in Moscow could be felt.

Nevertheless, the arrival of the American corn had striking and instantaneous effects on the whole situation in the famine zone.<sup>10</sup> Merely the evidence that food was actually coming put an end to the panic of those who still possessed some strength and were disposed to use it in getting away. The movement of refugees from the villages to the towns slowed down and presently ceased, and in its place a counter-movement back to the villages began and was actively promoted by the A.R.A. By no means everyone immediately returned to his village, yet the change was striking, as if some absolute authority had given the order to countermarch to these be-draggled lines of refugees. The return of refugees to their villages, which continued steadily through many months, well into the next year, was one of the most important results of relief activities. Peasants, who had reached the cities or transportation centers, and had remained there for weeks waiting for the means of escape which never came, were urged by Americans to go back to their villages. They were provided with food for the journey and promised that they would be supplied until the harvest. Thus in Kazan the A.R.A. was for a time sending off a hundred a day, and this same activity was being carried on in every other district. The importance

<sup>10</sup> The development of adult and child feeding from January to August 1922 is shown by the following figures. Adults are shown in bold face:

1922	Moscow, Petro- grad	Volga Districts	Trans- Volga Districts	Ukraine & Crimea	White Russia	Total
January ...	66,218 <b>1,550</b>	845,182 <b>4,720</b>	80,751 <b>1,194</b>			992,151 7,464 } 999,615
February ..	69,040 <b>204</b>	1,046,688 <b>4,720</b>	197,299 <b>3,000</b>			1,313,027 7,924 } 1,320,951
March ....	71,710 <b>1,293</b>	1,202,108 <b>7,471</b>	275,120 <b>945</b>			1,548,938 9,709 } 1,558,647
April .....	72,824 <b>3,029</b>	1,300,875 <b>415,321</b>	366,269 <b>263,445</b>			1,739,968 681,795 } 2,421,763
May .....	72,399 <b>13,412</b>	1,419,183 <b>2,032,086</b>	498,919 <b>948,230</b>	7,000		1,997,501 2,993,728 } 4,991,229
June .....	73,553 <b>21,523</b>	1,905,809 <b>3,188,548</b>	611,969 <b>1,285,562</b>	230,000		2,821,331 4,500,650 } 7,321,981
July .....	71,696 <b>24,382</b>	2,251,896 <b>3,641,443</b>	720,605 <b>1,317,820</b>	566,977 <b>362,573</b>	5,017 2,000	3,613,174 5,353,718 } 8,966,892
August ....	78,756 <b>22,326</b>	2,265,944 <b>3,338,765</b>	844,497 <b>1,881,768</b>	982,042 <b>1,066,572</b>	2,100 8,527	4,173,339 6,317,958 } 10,491,297

Full feeding table is given in Appendix B.

of getting these workers back on the soil was, of course, enormous.

Along with the news of the successful distribution of corn there came to Moscow reports from all over Russia that the seed which the A.R.A. had bought with Soviet funds and brought to Russia was, thanks to the American food, being planted by the peasants and not eaten. But most striking of all the changes was the abrupt decrease in the number of deaths from starvation throughout the whole famine zone. It was not necessary for American food to reach every individual to bring about this remarkable change throughout this vast territory. Almost as important as the food itself was the knowledge that it was coming in increasing quantities. The prices of local food products everywhere dropped, and such hidden supplies as existed began to be revealed. People were still underfed; there were still occasional deaths from starvation, and distress was everywhere; but, within a few weeks' time, the demand which began to be most widely expressed was not for food, but for horses, tools, and the supplies necessary for the planting season. The Russians were looking ahead.

### SPRING CLEANING

With the coming of warm weather, and the disappearance of many of the troubles that had taken their time and energies, the Americans in the districts were able to devote some time to the side issues which were in themselves interesting and were productive of much good to Russia. In practically every large town of the famine zone there remained, even after the most energetic efforts of the authorities and the A.R.A., a number, varying greatly, of refugees from distant places. Many of them had not the means, and frequently not the strength, to beat their way back to their homes. They remained, therefore, a public charge on these communities, which had already more charges than they could bear. The refugees, living about the stations or in designated buildings, presented a difficult problem. They had to be fed, but the precedent of feeding people without requiring any work from them was a dangerous one. Many, inured to the most difficult manner of existence, were

willing to continue indefinitely in the status of refugees, as long as they were fed. Their feeding had been taken over by the A.R.A. when local supplies failed, but the Americans had no intention of taking the responsibility for their continuous support, when they appeared in no way anxious to do anything for themselves. The idea of employing refugees in public works, in repayment for what they were receiving from the A.R.A., apparently occurred to the Americans in several districts at about the same time. In every district there was plenty of work which the refugees could perform. The melting snow revealed in the streets and in the courtyards mountains of filth and rubbish, which had been accumulating for years and which had been responsible for the steady increase in deaths from virulent epidemics. So, in every city in the famine regions, the Americans organized clean up campaigns and for the first time since before the Revolution the streets were clean. This spring housecleaning movement soon grew into much more ambitious activities. This, however, occurred at a later date and will be described in another place.

#### THE LOSS OF BLANDY AND SHEILD

The work of relief in the terrible winter of 1921-22 was not accomplished without heavy cost of lives of men and women, Russians and Americans, who participated. This was inevitable, for those on the famine front,—especially those engaged in inspection,—were compelled to do their work under the most dangerous conditions. They were exposed to the epidemic diseases, to the rigors of a severe climate, and even to the attacks of desperate men, demoralized by a decade of war, or maddened by hunger. It was one of the functions of the physicians of the Medical Division to care for the Americans who were ill and to provide for the treatment of the Russian personnel in need of it. This function they performed with devotion, and it is because of this that the losses were as few as they were.

But the most watchful Medical Division could not prevent illness. The department of the A.R.A. which suffered most in the illness of its Russian associates was the courier section



of the Administration Division. The Russians in this service not only carried large sums of money, drugs, and other articles of great value without failing in their responsibility; they cheerfully and unhesitatingly carried out their assignments in the face of the typhus menace which attacked one-third of all who were thus employed.<sup>11</sup> In the districts, even the office workers were continuously exposed to typhus. The Ufa-Urals District suffered perhaps worst of all, for seventy of its Russian workers were stricken and fourteen died. In the Ufa-Urals District, also, there were more cases of typhus among the Americans, and here the A.R.A. suffered its first famine casualty. First Bell, then Hofstra, and finally Blandy fell ill. Bell and Hofstra recovered, but Blandy after a brave fight succumbed.<sup>12</sup> The people of Ufa, with whom Blandy was very popular and for whom he gave his life, honored him in death. Many expressions of sorrow, personal and official, were sent to both the A.R.A. and his family, and a permanent memorial, such as the young American would have preferred, was established in the Blandy Memorial Hospital at Ufa.

There were several other cases of serious illness among the Americans in other districts, but, thanks to good care and courageous spirits, all recovered. Some were invalided home; others resumed their work after a short period of convalescence.

The second A.R.A. casualty occurred some months later at Simbirsk. On October 15, 1922, Philip B. Sheild disappeared.<sup>13</sup> Dalton, the District Supervisor at Simbirsk, and the other members of the mission made every possible effort, privately and in coöperation with local officials, to learn the fate of one who was both a colleague and a friend. Haskell enlisted the aid of the Central Government, and himself went to Simbirsk to assist in the search. But all efforts were in vain. No clue

<sup>11</sup> Edward G. Sabine has given a full account of this and other aspects of the work in his "History of the Administrative Division." Also W. L. Schuckman, "Mail and Courier Service in Russia," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXVI, 5-9; J. J. Mangan, "Russian Courier Service in Relief Work," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXVIII, 18-20; W. F. Nolan, "Organization of the Telegraph Service for Relief," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXX, 24-26.

<sup>12</sup> Harold F. Blandy of New York City. Born in New York City, June 14, 1889; served in British Air Force during the war; died at Ufa, May 17, 1922.

<sup>13</sup> Philip B. Sheild, of Richmond, Virginia. Served with American ambulance attached to the French Army during the World War. Received Croix de Guerre. Disappeared at Simbirsk, October 15, 1922.

was ever discovered which threw any light on this mysterious and tragic affair. The suicide theory was abandoned for lack of evidence or motive. The only tenable explanation was that the American had been killed by bandits who, presumably, had participated in thefts from an A.R.A. warehouse, which Sheild had uncovered. This theory was held by the Moscow and Simbirsk police investigators, as well as the A.R.A. Sheild's loss was keenly felt, not only by the Americans, but by the Russians whom he had so capably served. As a memorial to him, the A.R.A. and the Simbirsk authorities collaborated in establishing the Sheild Children's Home.

## CHAPTER X

### SKIRMISHES ON THE HOME FRONT

THE establishment of a relief organization and the delivery of food to the hungry did not, as has appeared, proceed along an untroubled course. In America—the home front of relief—the skies were not always clear.

The Twenty Million Dollar Appropriation, with its assurance that Russia would be very substantially helped, passed, as has been seen, without precipitating any real storm of opposition. The fitful, gusty breezes of disfavor which it did produce were all too gentle to do justice to such a formidable weather breeder as the Russian question in 1922. The weather was too fair to last. Just about the time that the first food purchased by the Congressional Appropriation began to reach Russian ports, a nasty squall broke over the relief activities in the United States. Although the squall did no particular damage to the cause of relief, beyond some unpleasantness, it deserves examination. Historically it is interesting, as revealing the state of mind of pro- and anti-Bolsheviks at this time and the tactics of Communist propagandists at the moment when the Russian question was a real political issue in Europe and America. From the point of view of the A.R.A., the incident illustrates the bilateral nature of its activity. It had not only to defend the integrity of its position in Russia, but also in America, and from the attacks of those who professed to be most deeply and sincerely interested in the welfare of Russia, as well as others less interested. The controversy centered on certain relief agencies, sponsored by radicals, near-radicals and liberals, and in examining it, there must be considered, first, the official connection between these organizations and the Soviet Government; second, the attitude of these organizations toward relief in general and the A.R.A. in particular; and



finally, the public controversy precipitated by Hoover's refusal to endorse the activities of one of these organizations.

#### RADICAL RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS

Among those who had been associated with the Soviet Bureau under L.C.A.K. Martens, the Soviet "Ambassador," and who subsequently became prominent in the radical relief activities, were Dr. D. H. Dubrowsky, Dr. J. G. Ohsol, and Dr. J. W. Hartmann. Shortly after the deportation of Martens, Dubrowsky filed (February 28, 1921) with the Secretary of State a letter stating that he had been appointed by the People's Commissariat for Nationalities of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic as its representative in the United States. He filed this letter in accordance with his interpretation of the Act of June 15, 1917, which requires all persons who are representing foreign governments within the jurisdiction of the United States to notify the Secretary of State of their status. Dubrowsky and Ohsol became members of the collegium of the American Bureau of the Red Cross Society of the Russian Soviet Republic. Dr. Hartmann succeeded Martens as editor of *Soviet Russia* magazine, and was a prominent member, as well as treasurer, of the Friends of Soviet Russia, when that body was organized in August, 1921. This body, like an industrious spider, proceeded to weave an intricate web of collecting agencies for relief, to suit every political taste. Among the groups were the Soviet Russia Medical Relief Society, the American Committee for the Relief of Russian Children, Technical Aid to Soviet Russia, and others.<sup>1</sup> Still another, the American Federated Russian Famine Relief Committee, was organized, according to the announcement of the Friends of Soviet Russia, "under instructions from the Red Cross Society of the Russian Soviet Republic . . . to pool all resources for direct relief, to make the purchases wholesale and ship supplies for distribution through the Russian Red Cross." This committee did not collect funds but received the collections made by the other committees, which were constituted to appeal to

<sup>1</sup> Affiliated with the Friends of Soviet Russia were many small groups belonging to the left wing of the labor movement, such as the American Labor Alliance, the Workers Council, and about two hundred others.

different political groups. For example, the Friends of Soviet Russia and its affiliated societies specialized on the extreme left wing of the radical movement, while the Soviet Red Cross and the American Committee for the Relief of Russian Children devoted their attention to the right wing and to sympathetic liberals. All these organizations, however, were held together and controlled by an interlocking directorate. Thus, Dubrowsky, who was the head of the Soviet Red Cross in America and the representative of a department of the Soviet Government, was also on the Executive Committee of the American Committee for the Relief of Russian Children and the Federated Committee. Hartmann was treasurer of the Friends of Soviet Russia and on the Executive Committee of the Federated. Ohsol was an official of the Soviet Red Cross, the American Committee for the Relief of Russian Children, and the Soviet Russia Medical Relief Society.<sup>2</sup>

In these interlocking directorates, the important point is simply that in the three societies—the Friends of Soviet Russia, the Federated Committee, and the Soviet Red Cross—centered the authority and direction which occupied the efforts of radical relief in this country, and these three societies, or the individuals directing them, were authoritative spokesmen of the Russian Communist Party, or perhaps more properly of the Third International, the organization for the advancement of Communism throughout the world.<sup>3</sup>

The origin, inspiration and attitude of the Friends of Soviet Russia, and its affiliated groups, was clear in its appeals, which consistently emphasized other matters than relief. As stated in its *Instruction Bulletin Number One*, the appeal was frankly “to working class interests rather than to humanitarian pity,” and it insisted that “all relief supplies shall be distributed

<sup>2</sup>In addition to persons affiliated with the left wing radical movement, the Federated Committee secured as members of its Advisory Council certain editors of weeklies which took a prominent part in relief controversies.

<sup>3</sup>The value of the work of these organizations in the political field was attested at the Fourth Congress of the Third International, held in Moscow in November, 1922. As quoted by *Pravda*, November 23, 1922, Willy Munzenberg of the Workers' International Famine Relief Committee assured the Third International that the political importance of the relief campaign had been immense, particularly in the United States and Japan. This campaign “gave us for the first time the opportunity to carry on our work in North America in the broad professional union circles and to unite them for relief work under the supervision of the Communist Party.”

through the accredited representatives of the Soviet Government." The appeal also made a particular point of attacking Hoover's efforts in behalf of Russia. The American Labor Alliance asked the workers of America to send money to the Friends of Soviet Russia, in the following terms: "Brothers! The 'humanitarian' Hoover is imposing the most insolent political conditions on famine stricken Russia. He wants to starve millions of people in order to protect a few Czarist officers and capitalist exploiters. The Soviet Government being most anxious to relieve the tragic situation has yielded to conditions unheard of in the relations between independent governments." After a good deal more in the same fashion, the appeal assured the workers that "your funds and contributions will be forwarded directly to the Soviet Government—free from blood-stained hands of your capitalist exploiters." The letterhead of the Friends of Soviet Russia carried this legend: "Our principle:—We make the working class appeal. Give, not only to feed the starving, but to save the Russian Workers' Revolution. Give without imposing imperialistic and reactionary conditions as do Hoover and others."

At first the leaders of the A.R.A. did not sense the real background of this movement. They assumed that it was of native origin and that it represented a larger body of opinion in the American labor movement than was actually the case. On the assumption that the radical relief societies were interested primarily in getting food to the starving, George Barr Baker, of the A.R.A., undertook to arrange a conference with Hoover of representatives of the right and left wings of the radical movement. The right wingers finally declined to participate because of their fear that the left wing groups were to be more fully represented than they. The conference met, without the right wingers, on September 22, 1921.

Hoover explained that the A.R.A. had no wish to interfere with the campaigns for funds which these societies were conducting, nor did the A.R.A. propose any means of coöperation whereby the funds so collected should be pooled with the resources of the A.R.A. He emphasized that the more collections



for relief there were, reaching all political groups, the more successful would be the American help given to Russia. He pointed out, however, that the attacks on the A.R.A. which had come from the radical movement, though doing no particular harm to himself and his associates, unquestionably did harm to the general cause of relief. It furnished ammunition to those who were opposed to relief for Russia and in particular gave encouragement to persons outside of Russia who were still agitating for intervention to overthrow the Soviet Government.<sup>4</sup> The representatives of the radical relief bodies appeared to appreciate this point, but admitted that they were unable to control the utterances of all the groups affiliated with their movement. They left the impression, however, that they would try to do so.

No valuable results came from this conference. The political objectives of the radical relief societies, with their obligations to couple propaganda favorable to Communism and the Soviet Government with relief appeals, resulted in the greatest energies going into political agitation. They conducted their campaigns largely with speakers and organizers of Communist leanings. This aroused the suspicions of the more conservative labor and Socialist groups. The suspicion grew that, under the cover of relief, a drive was being made to disrupt the labor organizations or to put their control in the hands of the left wingers, affiliated with the Russian Communist Party and the Third International. Subsequently the Friends of Soviet Russia were publicly charged with having diverted relief funds for this purpose,<sup>5</sup> and the recriminations between left and right wingers were lively and bitter.

<sup>4</sup> An example of this anti-relief propaganda is the following dispatch which appeared in the London press on December 8th, under a Helsingfors date line: "The Bolshevik representative of Hoover's American Relief Committee admits in *Izvestia* that the food supplies sent from abroad to Russia are mostly distributed to the organized Communists and Red Guards in Petrograd and Moscow."

<sup>5</sup> By Abraham Cahan, Editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward* (New York), in August, 1922. A long controversy followed without conclusive result. The Socialist Labor Party (of America) also bitterly attacked the Friends of Soviet Russia on similar grounds. See a pamphlet, *Nailing a Calumny and Pinning the Calumniators: An Experience with the Friends of Soviet Russia*, published by the Socialist Labor Party. 45 Rose St., New York, 1922.

## A NEW VARIETY OF COMMITTEE

All this kicked up considerable dust in limited circles, but brought in little cash. Cash was necessary, both for relief and to hire speakers, and in due time an idea was conceived of great promise. Dubrowsky, unofficially representing official Moscow, was asked to finance to the extent of \$5,000 the establishment of a new committee which to all intents and purposes would have no connection with the radical groups. The new organization would take on the appearance of political orthodoxy with the garniture of an advisory council composed of unsuspecting members of Congress. Dubrowsky was impressed by the scheme to the extent of risking not \$5,000 but \$3,500 on it, whereupon a contract was drawn up and signed on December 5, 1921, by which "the Collegium of the American Bureau of the Russian Red Cross hereby employs, authorizes and empowers . . . A. W. Ricker and Walter Liggett to organize the American Committee for Russian Famine Relief with headquarters at Chicago, Illinois, the purpose of which Committee is to raise funds for the relief of Russian famine sufferers." A later paragraph in the contract provided that "the distribution of said relief and funds within Russia shall be through the Russian Red Cross," and "the American Relief Committee shall retain the privilege of appointing agents from its own body, who shall inspect and supervise distribution of relief in the Russian famine district."<sup>6</sup> This contract which so clearly established the relationship of the new committee to a Soviet Russian organization of semi-official character was not made public, and so when the committee made its début with an Advisory Council, including ten senators, eight congressmen, thirteen governors, two ex-governors, one cardinal, and twenty-three bishops, it was not only innocent and impressive, but seemed to carry the blessing of officialdom. Many of the eminent persons on this Advisory Council were unpleasantly astonished when truth came out, for they had accepted the story spread abroad by the Committee to the effect that in January

<sup>6</sup> This contract was signed by D. H. Dubrowsky, J. G. Ohsol, and M. Michailovsky for the Russian Red Cross, and A. W. Ricker, W. W. Liggett and James H. McGill for the new committee. *New York Times*, February 10, 1922.

"inadequacy of relief to meet the famine situation in the Volga Valley . . . prompted the organization of the American Committee for Russian Famine Relief by Congressmen who were responsible for passage of the \$20,000,000 appropriation bill for Russian relief."<sup>7</sup>

This American Committee for Russian Famine Relief (the Liggett-Dubrowsky combination) was launched on a seemingly promising career in a splash of well-managed publicity. But trouble was inevitable. The doubtful antecedents of the committee could not be kept hidden. The political antics of the Friends of Soviet Russia and its satellites gave more irritation to the already inflamed minds of the anti-Bolshevik crusaders. When, moreover, the meetings addressed by organizers of the new committee began to pass resolutions demanding recognition or trade relations with Russia,<sup>8</sup> the opponents of such a policy began to inspect the motives of Liggett and his friends. Newspapers, scenting the possibility of a serviceable and sensational exposé, began to investigate. Persons solicited by Liggett to lend their influence to his campaign began to make inquiries, and some of these inquiries came to Hoover. Was he connected with this campaign, they asked, or did he endorse it? Complaints came to Hoover also from some of the sectarian relief societies, affiliated with the A.R.A., that the Liggett Committee was invading their territory and depriving them of contributions upon which they counted for the support of the program they had undertaken.

For a time Hoover knew no more of the origins of the Liggett Committee than anyone else. He did know that on November 30, 1921, Liggett had discussed with C. A. Herter (assistant to Mr. Hoover) the conditions under which Hoover was prepared to endorse relief efforts, and that on December 2

<sup>7</sup> Published in many papers in the middle west, among them the *Canton Ledger* (Illinois), January 28, 1922, and the *Fergus Falls Press* (Minnesota), February 2, 1922.

<sup>8</sup> In its issue of January 27, 1922, *Voice of Labor*, devoted to the interests of the Workers' Party (Communist), published an article, written by M. J. Loeb, Secretary of the Chicago branch of the Friends of Soviet Russia, in which the American Committee for Russian Famine Relief was explained to Communists: "This organization is officered by the liberal element and announces a policy of propaganda for the recognition of the Soviet Government, both economically and politically." The point of the article was to show that Hoover was endeavoring to promote counter-revolution in Russia by hindering relief.



(i.e., three days before Liggett signed his contract with Dubrowsky), Herter sent Liggett a letter stating specifically the conditions a soliciting organization should fulfill if it desired the endorsement of the A.R.A. The first two conditions were "(a) To work under the Riga Agreement, (b) To do all distribution at the hands of actual Americans."

About the time the Liggett Committee began to attract public attention, that is, in January 1922, Hoover was informed of its true origin. Obviously it could not work under the Riga Agreement or distribute through Americans, but only through the Soviet Red Cross. Naturally he could not endorse it to those who asked his opinion, for he did not approve the method of distribution, or the lack of definite understanding with the Soviet Government, and he believed, with good reason, that the contract with Dubrowsky was unknown to many who were listed on the Committee's Advisory Council.

Matters came to a head in the middle of January, 1922. Governor Davis of Idaho, who had been asked to become a member of this Advisory Committee, wired Hoover for information. Hoover replied (January 14, 1922) by quoting a telegram sent by the Department of Justice<sup>9</sup> in answer to a similar query. The telegram named the Friends of Soviet Russia, the Russian Red Cross, Medical Relief for Soviet Russia, and the American Federated Russian Famine Relief Committee as relief organizations "officered and managed by well known Communists or sympathizers."<sup>10</sup> Although this telegram made no reference to the American Committee for Russian Famine Relief, Liggett felt it implied that his Committee had a Communist taint, and immediately wired (Janu-

<sup>9</sup> To the *Milwaukee Journal*, December 30, 1921.

<sup>10</sup> The full text of the telegram is as follows: "Following relief committees are officered and managed by well known Communists or sympathizers. First, Friends of Soviet Russia; second, Russian Red Cross; third, Medical Relief to Soviet Russia; fourth, American Federated Russian Famine Relief Committee. The officers among others comprise Dr. Dubrowsky and Dr. Jacob Hartmann, formerly connected with Ludwig Martens. Such portions of their funds or supplies as are transmitted by them to Russia are shipped to the Soviet officials for distribution by them. These organizations are apparently opposed to the American Relief Administration which handles the Congressional appropriations and distributes its supplies under American direction as is shown by the letterhead of the Friends of Soviet Russia, which bears this statement: 'Our principle. We make the working class appeal. Give not only to feed the starving but to save the Russian workers' revolution. Give without imposing imperialistic and reactionary conditions as do Hoover and others.'"

ary 14, 1922) Hoover for the text of his telegram to Governor Davis. Hoover at once replied (January 16, 1922) supplying the text of the telegram to which he added the following:

"I understand Doctor Dubrowsky states that all supplies collected through the Russian Red Cross are dispatched to the Soviet authorities for distribution, in fact that all supplies so far shipped have been sent to these authorities. I have not the slightest criticism to any one of any faith recruiting supplies for the famine sufferers, but I doubt whether all of the eminent men who have joined your committee are aware of the above facts. They might prefer to direct their support to such organizations as the Friends Service Committee [Quakers] and others who are represented in Russia by Americans and whose distribution is directly in the hands of Americans. I feel that aid by Americans should be distributed by well known American organizations in Russia as a matter of national pride if for no other reasons. If you will send this telegram to the members of your committee and they make the arrangements clear to their subscribers it would seem to me to settle the whole matter."

Liggett did not adopt this suggestion. Instead he went post haste to Washington to persuade Hoover of the error of his ways and get his endorsement of the new committee. In his conference with Hoover (January 17) Liggett admitted the arrangement with Dubrowsky and endeavored to justify it. When he perceived that Hoover was unconverted, Liggett warned him that the new committee had strong senatorial backing and that it would be politically dangerous for Hoover not to accept it at its face value.<sup>11</sup> This threat was no more effective than argument. Hoover set forth his position in the whole matter in a letter to Liggett (January 23). He reviewed the relations between Liggett's committee and Dubrowsky and referred to the activities of other relief committees, frankly Communistic, of which Dubrowsky was a member. Hoover pointed out that he was opposed to the stimulation of appeals for charity in the United States by foreign governments, a position which he had taken in the case of some of the Allies during

<sup>11</sup> A memorandum of this meeting was written immediately afterward by C. A. Herter, who was present.

the war; that he believed that as security of proper expenditure and efficient distribution American charity should be distributed by Americans. To settle the whole matter he made this suggestion:

"I wish to accept in good faith your desire to secure additional charity for suffering humanity. There are eleven independent and undoubted American organizations already covering the American field on behalf of Russia. I see no particular reason for the addition of one more. Every church in America is already a collecting agency. In view of the above I would like to make you the following suggestion:

"That you should disassociate your organization entirely from its present connections and enter into arrangements with some one of the American committees who have a competent organization in Russia; that they should place proper representation upon your executive committee and in your administration, and that all funds secured should be turned over to them for expenditure and for distribution. The American Relief Administration, of which I am chairman, has no wish to participate in public appeals, and therefore does not desire to handle your funds.

"I understand also that no purchases have been made so far from funds raised and no goods have been shipped. You have, therefore, made no commitments that should prevent you from making arrangements as I suggested in the paragraph above."

Liggett replied (January 26, 1922) at great length. He declared that "documents . . . make it unmistakably plain that Dr. Dubrowsky has nothing whatever to do with our Committee"; that "the project was not conceived by the American Bureau of the Russian Red Cross, but originated with a number of United States senators, representatives, and other prominent men and women whose sole purpose was to launch a large and efficient campaign to raise relief for Russia."<sup>12</sup> He invited the A.R.A. to participate in the supervision of the supplies sent to the Soviet Red Cross, without, however, indicating how that supervision could be made effective in the absence

<sup>12</sup> The scheme was described in detail in a letter from Liggett and A. W. Ricker to Dubrowsky and Ohsol, December 3, 1921. *New York Times*, February 10, 1922.



of a definite agreement with the Soviet Government. He justified the use of the Soviet Red Cross because it had "units in every locality in Russia." Liggett further alleged that the Soviet Red Cross was not controlled by the Soviet Government "to any greater degree than the American Red Cross is controlled by the United States Government" and that "its present chairman served under the Czar for several years and also under the Miliukoff and Kerensky régimes." The apologists of this committee made much of these alleged political antecedents of the chairman of the Soviet Red Cross. As a matter of fact, Soloviev was not merely a prominent Communist, but a member of the Soviet Government as Assistant Commissar of Health, and was Surgeon General of the Red Army besides.

With regard to Hoover's important suggestion that the Liggett Committee prove its independence of Soviet connection by terminating its agreement with Dubrowsky and distributing through American organizations other than the A.R.A., Liggett said:

"We likewise feel, however, while reserving the right to distribute as we see fit, there is merit in your suggestion that we should also avail ourselves of the distributive facilities of other American relief agencies now operating in Russia. We are willing to take this step, the more so because we are non-political and non-sectarian and have upon our committee representatives of every race and creed in America. We are already coöperating with the Quakers (we direct all shipments of grain through them) and we welcome the suggestion that we more fully coöperate with the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the Friends, the Lutherans, the Jews, and other relief organizations."

The letter closed with a statement of the accomplishments and plans of the committee and an appeal for Mr. Hoover's support.

There followed no real change in the policy of the Liggett Committee which would not or could not break away from Dubrowsky and the Soviet Red Cross, and without this break, none of the American relief societies would accept the respon-

sibility of "supervision" which they could not discharge. Hoover, therefore, withheld his endorsement. And so did the National Information Bureau, an organization formed by charitable bodies and contributors to benevolent enterprises for the purpose of protecting contributors from individuals or committees soliciting funds fraudulently or without proper organization for the satisfactory administration of their collections. Furthermore, a few weeks later, after the origin of the Liggett Committee had been exposed in the press, Liggett requested the A.F.S.C. (Quakers) to take over all funds raised by his committee. The Quakers agreed to do this only under the following conditions:

(1) Before beginning another campaign the American Committee for Russian Famine Relief should give satisfactory proof of having paid back to the Russian Red Cross officials \$4,500, or whatever sum was advanced for the work of this committee; and further that the agreement concerning disposal of supplies with the Russian Red Cross officials in this country be terminated.

(2) The consent of the American Committee to this change in plan of distribution should be secured.

(3) The organization and plan of action of the campaign of this committee should receive full endorsement of the National Information Bureau.

(4) The American Committee's books should be regularly audited by certified public accountants.

(5) That the American Friends Service Committee, or the term "Quakers" should not be connected with the appeal of this Committee for funds except to state that the distribution in Russia would be under the direction of the A.F.S.C.<sup>13</sup>

In view of the number of people who gradually became involved in these discussions, it is not surprising that the matter became public through the press. On February 9 the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* published accounts of the origin of the Liggett Committee, emphasizing the more sensational features of the affair, which were the connection of this Committee with a representative of the Soviet Government in America. This, and the prominence of persons

<sup>13</sup> From a letter from Wilbur K. Thomas, Executive Secretary of the A.F.S.C., to A. W. Ricker, March 10, 1922.

who had allowed their names to be used, provided the materials for a striking story which was published throughout the length and breadth of the country. The effect of this publicity was to cause a large number of the members of the Advisory Council of the Committee to declare their ignorance of the Committee's origin and to withdraw immediately from it. Liggett and his associates, on the theory that the best defence is a strong attack, proceeded to parade again the now familiar charge that Hoover was using relief for political ends.<sup>14</sup> These attacks, however, failed to injure Hoover, to hamper the A.R.A., or to establish public confidence in the Liggett Committee. After the first outburst, the controversy quickly died down. The American Committee for Russian Famine soon passed into oblivion to the accompaniment of recriminations between its promoters and backers.<sup>15</sup>

#### RUSSIAN TRANSPORT CONTROVERSY

Just as this controversy was about to reach the boiling point, another phase of Russian relief became the subject of another acrimonious debate. The matter at issue was the capacity of Russian ports and transportation facilities to handle relief supplies. Earlier chapters have shown by what a narrow margin the relief program escaped disaster in the breakdown of transport. While these rail and port troubles were still acute, critics of the A.R.A. raised the familiar cry that a new attempt was being made to overthrow the Communist power. The attempt, so it appeared, was being made by the ingenious method of misrepresenting the capacity of Russian railways.

In the course of the hearings on the Twenty Million Dollar Appropriation in December, Hoover had stated that, while it was difficult to judge the actual relief requirements of Russia,

<sup>14</sup> These were included in letters to the press. *New York Times*, February 16, 1922.

<sup>15</sup> In response to a request from President Harding for a report on the status of famine relief campaign in the United States, Hoover prepared a resumé of the work of the A.R.A., the funds available, the affiliated societies, and other bodies engaged in the solicitation of funds. In that statement he estimated that the "radical" relief committees had apparently secured at that time about \$350,000 in cash and \$200,000 in kind, the A.R.A. and affiliated bodies about \$52,899,000. This report was published on February 11, 1922. It is given in full in Appendix A, Doc. XVI.



the matter of transportation rather than need would be the decisive factor in determining the extent of the relief that it would be possible to give. He estimated, at that time, that the transportation situation would probably limit the movement of supplies from ports to the interior to about 100,000 tons a month.<sup>16</sup> On the basis of that figure, he estimated that the \$20,000,000 would purchase all the supplies which, in addition to the supplies being sent in by other organizations and by the Soviet Government, could be transported and delivered to the famine sufferers before the next harvest. The question of the accuracy of this estimate was not raised at this time, but a few months later, in March, when the Russian ports and railways were being actually overloaded and when it began to be demonstrated to the A.R.A. that their capacity would be much less than even this estimate, the charge of deliberate misrepresentation was levelled against Hoover and other A.R.A. officials who publicly admitted that the transport situation was serious. It is unnecessary to treat this controversy in detail. A few facts will illustrate how the question of Russian relief became a convenient political missile.

Russian relief and Hoover's part in it were brought up somewhat irrelevantly on February 8, 1922, in a hearing before the Senate Committee on Agriculture on a bill to stabilize the prices of certain agricultural products.<sup>17</sup> Benjamin C. Marsh, Manager of the Farmers' National Council, in his testimony said: "I am going to criticize Mr. Hoover's opposition to the so-called Norris Farm Products Export Corporation, and I will state frankly that I think he used his office improperly to attempt to kill the soviet government." The Committee summoned other witnesses, one of whom declared that the Russian ports and railways could handle several times the amount of supplies being shipped by the A.R.A. This sensational testimony<sup>18</sup> attracted little attention except among those who had

<sup>16</sup> *Russia Relief: Hearings before the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, 67th Congress, 2nd Session on H. R. 9549 and H. R. 9548, December 13 and 14, 1921, p. 38.*

<sup>17</sup> Hearings before the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry U. S. Senate, 67th Congress, 2nd Session, on S 2964, p. 128.

<sup>18</sup> It was sensational in other respects, as for example the following statement: "You must remember that the Russian people were 85 per cent illiterate in the old Czarist days. They have reduced that to about 45 per cent already." Senate Hearings on S 2964, 67th Congress, March 2, 1922.

dedicated themselves to saving the Soviet Government from being overturned by the A.R.A. "baby feeders" and welcomed the solemn statements which now seem so absurd.

Another aspect of this controversy was the accusation that the A.R.A. magnified transport difficulties, in order to cripple the relief campaigns of other groups—notably the Quakers. Writers in radical papers dwelt long on the spectacle of this arch enemy of Russia, so bent on the destruction of the Soviet power that it contrived meanly to injure a coöperating relief society, whose organization it did not control. Extracts from two letters clear up this point. From Hoover to Rufus M. Jones, Chairman of the American Friends Service Committee, February 13, 1922:

" . . . If you like I will send you a statement to the following effect:

"The American Relief Administration has made arrangements to deliver food supplies to the Friends Service Committee pro rata with their own stations in event of any temporary shortage in transportation, and greatly hopes that all stations can be maintained in full supplies. It is hoped that the period of shortage in transport will be greatly ameliorated with the thaw of Baltic ports."

Professor Jones wrote in reply:

"I want to thank you most heartily for your splendid letter of February 13th. . . . I want personally to express my great appreciation of the way in which you have dealt with our affairs in this letter."

## CHAPTER XI

### FAMINE IN THE UKRAINE <sup>1</sup>

AT the beginning of the relief operations it was generally believed, by the A.R.A. and others interested in relief, that the "famine regions" were confined to the gubernias along the Volga and on the western slope of the Urals. The drought, it was commonly believed, affected severely only these areas, and there was nothing in either the official statements or the famine policy of the Soviet Government to suggest that the northern shores of the Black Sea reproduced all the horrors of the Volga.<sup>2</sup> The knowledge that south Russia offered a relief problem almost as vast as the eastern regions came to the A.R.A. from its independent investigations, undertaken first in the expansion of the Food Remittance deliveries.

The Food Remittance Agreement, as has been noted, was signed in Moscow on October 19, 1921, and immediately the A.R.A. offices in Europe and America began the sale of remittances. The reports from the sales offices quickly showed that by far the greater part of the business would call for deliveries of packages in White Russia and the Ukraine. It is here that the Jews live in greatest numbers and it was from these regions that the emigrants from Imperial Russia to America had principally come. For the carrying out of the

<sup>1</sup> The territory of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic (U. S. S. R.) extends roughly from the Donetz to the Dniester Rivers and from the Black Sea to approximately latitude 52°. It covers an area of about 178,000 square miles with a population of 26,000,000, of whom 76 per cent are Ukrainians, 11 per cent Great Russians, 7 per cent Jews, 3 per cent Germans, and 3 per cent other races. It is one of the richest regions of Russia, its agricultural lands yielding abundant crops of cereals and sugar beets, and its coal and iron mines forming the basis of the most important industrial region of Russia—the Donetz Basin. At the time of the famine of 1921 the Ukraine was divided into twelve gubernias. Five of these, with an area of about 85,000 square miles and a population of some 9,600,000, were ultimately recognized as "famine" gubernias.

<sup>2</sup> Chicherin's note of August 3, 1921, to all governments did not list Ukrainian gubernias among the "distressed." *Soviet Russia*, V, 91.



Food Remittance business, therefore, the established offices for the administration of relief were inadequate. Food Remittance delivery stations must be organized in southern and western Russia in important cities, such as Kharkov, Odessa, Minsk and Kiev, and the A.R.A. asked the coöperation of the Soviet Government in opening these stations.

At about the same time, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee asked the A.R.A. to make an investigation in the Ukraine. Besides generously supporting the whole Russian relief program, the J.D.C. was naturally especially interested in the members of its faith, who dwelt in such large numbers in that part of Russia. Reports of frightful conditions among the Jewish communities had come to the J.D.C., which declared its intention to increase its support of relief work in Russia. To this end, James N. Rosenberg and Walter Lyman Brown, European Directors of the J.D.C. and the A.R.A., on October 20, 1921, drew up in London a memorandum asking Colonel Haskell to send a competent and non-partisan investigator to the Ukraine to report on food conditions in general, and incidentally on the situation among the Jewish people. And so it was for this investigation, as well as to notify the Ukrainian officials of the impending arrival of A.R.A. men to establish Food Remittance delivery stations, that Haskell asked the Soviet Government to allow Dr. Lincoln Hutchinson and Dr. F. A. Golder to go to the Ukraine.

#### UKRAINIAN INVESTIGATIONS

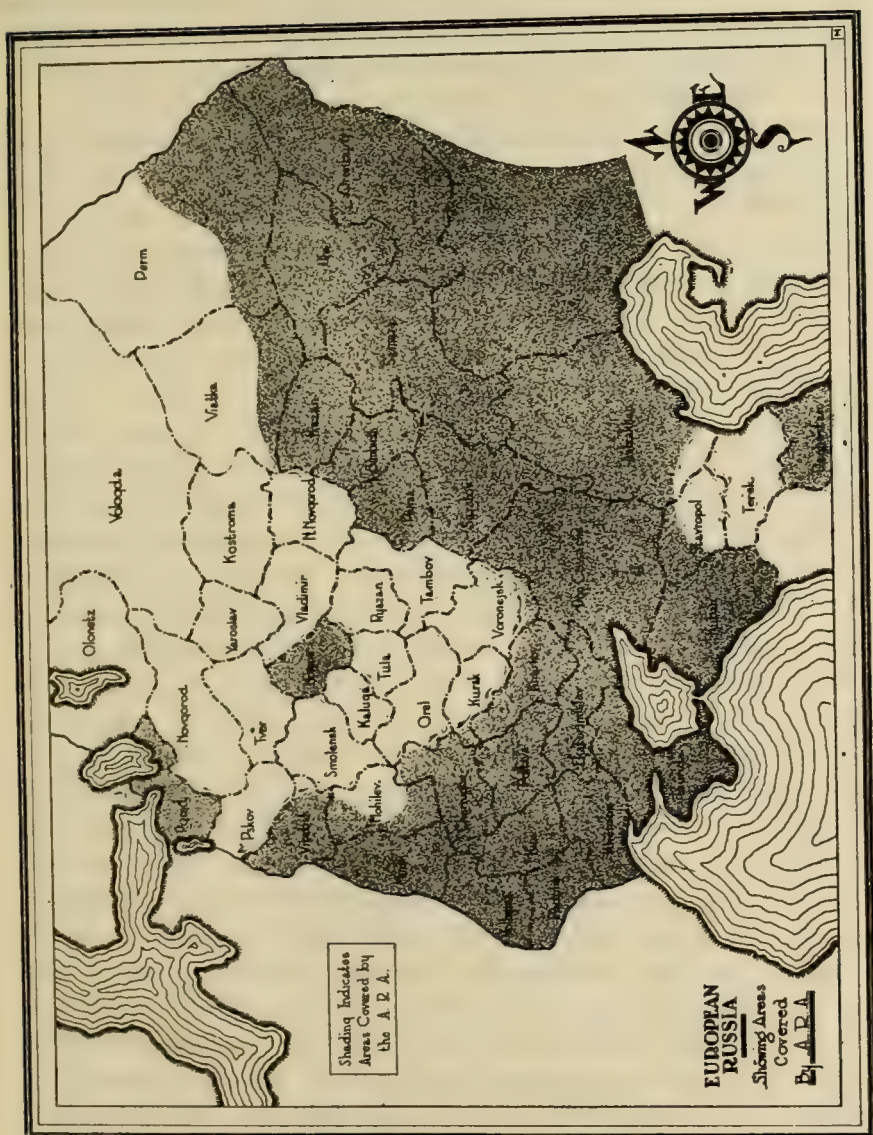
The request was the signal for the curtain to rise on one of those extraordinary comedies which gave spice and variety to the A.R.A. operations. Unfortunately these comedies, being played always against a background of overshadowing tragedy, could never be appreciated at the time.

First, upon the request for a permission to visit the Ukraine, came a letter from Eiduk (November 16, 1921), stating that Hutchinson and Golder could not be permitted to make the investigation, since the gubernias of Kiev, Volhynia, Chernigov, Podolia, and Poltava were not famine gubernias, but, on the contrary, had produced a surplus, part of which had been

exported to support the central provinces of Russia. Moreover, the government could not understand why the A.R.A. should send any of its men to places where there were no starving. Eiduk added that, "it is necessary to request the A.R.A. not to split its forces, but to concentrate them entirely on the Volga area." The usual amount of argument followed and ended with the A.R.A.'s getting what it had gone after.

Hutchinson and Golder left Moscow in due course, arriving in Kiev on November 26. They interviewed the members of the Gubernia Executive Committee, who were extremely cordial and promised to facilitate the opening of a Food Remittance delivery station. But as for information on the food conditions of the Ukraine and other official matters, they directed the investigators to Kharkov, the seat of the Ukrainian Government.

Arriving in Kharkov, on November 30, the two Americans immediately tried to get in contact with the Ukrainian officials. The Kharkov Gubernia officials were evasive and non-committal, and it was only after meeting members of the government of the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic that Hutchinson and Golder realized that the situation had depths which they had not plumbed. Dr. Christian Rakovsky, the capable chairman of the Council of Peoples Commissars of the Ukraine, was unable to be present at the meeting and the government was represented by Comrade Skripnik, Commissar of Internal Affairs. To Skripnik, Hutchinson and Golder explained that the purpose of their visit was to secure the coöperation of the Ukrainian Government in carrying out the relief work which the A.R.A. had undertaken in Russia, in accordance with the terms of the several agreements made with the Government of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic. Greatly to the astonishment of the Americans, the Commissar announced, with caustic emphasis, that the Ukrainian Socialist Soviet Republic was not a party to these agreements, knew nothing of them, and was in no sense bound by them. To the Americans' rejoinder that the A.R.A. had understood that the agreements were binding on all the federated republics, including the Ukraine, and that the central authorities in Moscow had by their attitude confirmed this understanding, Skripnik





replied, politely, that they were poorly informed and that the Ukraine and Russia were independent states, closely allied it was true, but as equals. To a direct question, whether the Ukraine would allow the A.R.A. to carry on its work within that territory, in accordance with the agreements made with the R.S.F.S.R., the Commissar declined to commit himself until after consultation with his colleagues.

The next day Skripnik gave his answer. Conditions in the southern part of the Ukraine were, he said, much worse than had been expected, and for this reason the help of the A.R.A. would be welcomed, on condition that an agreement be made with his government, which took into consideration its independent status and its laws and institutions. This brought the argument back to where it was on the previous day, namely, to a discussion of the political status of the Ukraine. "Such questions," the Americans declared, "are not a part of our business. We have come to the Ukraine not to discuss politics, but to feed the hungry." "But you are mixing in politics," exclaimed the Commissar, "when you differentiate between the two Republics; when you treat with one, and refuse to do so with the other; when you regard one as a sovereign state, and the other as a subject state." The discussion continued for some time, the Commissar endeavoring to have a temporary agreement drawn up at once, and the Americans reiterating their lack of authority to do this. To the request that they be allowed to carry out their investigation, Skripnik answered evasively, and Hutchinson and Golder concluded that there was nothing to do but return to Moscow, where the diplomatic entanglements could be unraveled, without involving the A.R.A. in the squabbles of the two governments.

Before leaving for Moscow, however, the investigators did secure an interview with officials of the Ukrainian Central Statistical Bureau, from whom they received very pessimistic reports, particularly respecting the southern tier of governments, bordering the Black Sea,—Odessa, Nikolaiev, Ekaterinoslav, the Donetz, and Zaporosh. On the other hand, the Bureau rather reluctantly admitted that the northern governments, that is, Kiev, Volhynia, Chernigov, Podolia, and Poltava, had excellent crops, and from their surplus had been able to send over

fifty million poods (about 833,000 tons) to Central Russia, and in addition had absorbed great numbers of refugees from the Volga.

An investigation trip which Dr. Hutchinson was able to make later, during the latter part of December and the first of January, 1922, while negotiations with the Ukraine were still going on, confirmed in general the information given by the Statistical Bureau at Kharkov.<sup>3</sup> The principal difference lay in the fact that the fortunate gubernias had produced even more than any one would admit, and the famine sections were even worse than the authorities had stated. In making his estimates of the needs of the Ukraine, Hutchinson had the aid, of doubtful value, of three official estimates, which were widely divergent. The Kharkov statisticians, who it was admitted had not made first hand investigations because they were Jews, and it was not safe for Jews, particularly Communist Jews, to travel in this country, placed the crop of cereal grains at about 400 million poods. Moscow authorities on the other hand placed the figure at between 700 and 800 millions. When Hutchinson tried to check up in any given locality, he discovered still another set of local estimates, which placed the production at only about 250 millions. His final conclusions were that, after deducting the requirements of food, fodder and seed, plus what had been exported from the Ukraine to Central Russia, there undoubtedly remained a surplus for the whole territory of about 93 million poods. Side by side with this surplus, there were famine conditions in the southern gubernias, just as severe as in the Volga. The famine in these sections, even more than in the Volga, could be attributed to the clogging of the channels of distribution. Fundamentally, the situation was due to inability to move the surplus which existed in certain regions, a relatively short distance and distribute it among those who were dying of hunger. There was need of relief, and Hutchinson recommended that the A.R.A. undertake this, in addition to its Food Remittance work, which in spite of official hostility in these regions, was by that time (January, 1922) developing.

<sup>3</sup> Lincoln Hutchinson, "Observations in the Ukraine"; *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXII, 7-13.

Efforts to clear the way for the Ukrainian feeding confirmed the existence of friction between Kharkov and Moscow, but did not clear up all its causes. From the first the Moscow government had discouraged all proposals which tended to bring the A.R.A. into contact with the Ukraine. Litvinov had described the port of Odessa, back in the fall of 1921, as out of the question for A.R.A. operations, although it was subsequently used very successfully. The port of Novorossisk was recommended as the only suitable Black Sea port, but Novorossisk is not in Ukrainian territory. It is also significant that, until the A.R.A. had investigated and established outposts in the south, Moscow virtually ignored in its press the famine conditions along the Black Sea, which were just as severe, though they did not reach the high water mark of agony so early, as on the Volga. The friction between the two capitals delayed relief, for nothing could be accomplished until due homage had been paid to the fictitious independence of the Ukrainian State, with a new agreement between the U.S.S.R. and the A.R.A.

#### THE UKRAINIAN AGREEMENT

The new agreement, almost identical with that of Riga, was made at a series of conferences begun late in December, 1921. Dr. Rakovsky, then in Moscow for the sessions of the All Russian Congress of Soviets, met Colonel Lonergan, acting for Haskell in his absence, and Professor Archibald C. Coolidge, Chief of the A.R.A. Liaison Division, and after generously attributing the A.R.A.'s ignorance of the Ukraine's status to its foreign and distant origin, flatly refused merely to ratify the Riga document, insisting on a new agreement or nothing. The A.R.A. agreed to a new document which embodied the articles of the Riga Agreement, with slight additions. A dignity saving "whereas" declared that:

"Whereas the Ukrainian Soviet Republic declares itself not a party to, nor obligated by the [Riga] Agreement referred to above and the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic concurs in this declaration of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic . . ."



On the initiative of the A.R.A., paragraphs were inserted establishing two principles not in the Riga Agreement. One was the right to transport relief stores across the Ukraine free of charge, to which Rakovsky agreed. The other concerned the Food Remittance operation and was as follows:

"The agreement of October 19th, 1921, between the American Relief Administration and the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic covering the operations of the American Relief Administration Warehouses in Russia, is accepted by the Ukrainian Authorities, with all its privileges and assistance to the A.R.A. and its mutual guarantees, as covering the operation of the American Relief Administration Warehouses in the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. The Ukrainian Authorities agree that the net profits accruing from the operation may be used, at the discretion of the A.R.A., for the feeding of children in the famine areas of Russia."

This revamped document became effective on January 10, 1922, when it was signed by Haskell and Rakovsky. The Ukrainians were appeased, and the A.R.A. was free to take on a new famine.<sup>4</sup>

#### AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE A.R.A. AND THE AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE (J.D.C.).

Even before the conclusion of this agreement on January 10, representatives of the A.R.A. were on the ground in some of the Ukrainian cities busily at work, preparing for the delivery of Food Remittance packages, in an atmosphere that was cold with suspicion. The reports which these men sent to Moscow merely confirmed what Dr. Hutchinson had said about the conditions of the population generally in the southern gubernias. In the northern sections, at this time, general feeding was not badly needed, but hospitals, institutions for the children, and the collecting points for refugees were as badly off as in other places in Russia. The A.R.A. recognized the necessity of spreading its operations, as far as resources would permit in consideration of the needs of the Volga region,

<sup>4</sup> For text of agreement see Appendix A, Doc. XII.

but the program in the Ukraine, which ultimately reached the figure of over 2,000,000 persons, could not have been accomplished by the A.R.A. alone. Fortunately, the J.D.C. came forward to give generously in support of these operations, without restricting the use of the funds to the relief of members of the Jewish race.

A series of conferences between representatives of the J.D.C. and Hoover, Rickard, and Baker of the A.R.A. in New York, in February and in the early part of March, 1922, produced an understanding by which a relief organization was to be set up in the Ukraine, to function for the time being as a district unit of the A.R.A. Russian organization. As soon as it was established and necessary arrangements had been completed, it was to become autonomous, and, gradually, a completely independent relief unit, administered by the J.D.C.<sup>5</sup> Colonel William R. Grove, who had carried out with distinction the first relief work of the A.R.A. in Poland in 1919, was selected as head of the new Ukrainian enterprise. The other personnel were to be furnished, part by the J.D.C. and part by the A.R.A. The J.D.C. indicated that it had about five million dollars available for Russian relief, at least half of which would be devoted to general feeding. The tentative program included 800,000 children, plus as many adults as could be reached with the corn from the Congressional Appropriation, after the chief needs of the Volga had been taken care of. The heaviest pressure on the J.D.C. naturally came for feeding the northern and western sections of the Ukraine and White Russia. But the possibility of devoting the principal part of the relief to these sections was never seriously considered by either the J.D.C. or the A.R.A. The officials of the J.D.C. recognized that the preponderant need lay in the southern gubernias, and, although the proportion of Jews to the total population was lower there than farther north, made the generous and humane decision that their funds

<sup>5</sup> This plan of an independent J.D.C. feeding operation was not carried out. August 14, 1922, a new agreement was drawn up to cover the program for the year 1922-1923. This established the amount of J.D.C. subventions, and provided that general supervision of the operation in the Ukraine and White Russia remain in the hands of the A.R.A. *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Series 2, No. XXVIII, 4. Apart from the feeding activities, the J.D.C. carried out a successful rural "reconstruction" program independent of the A.R.A.

should be used in the localities where the greatest need existed and for the benefit of those in greatest want, without regard to race or religion.

On its part in the J.D.C. Agreement, the A.R.A. undertook to continue its medical relief and Food Remittance work in the Ukraine, both of which were rapidly expanding at the time, besides superintending the general work. Colonel Grove, accompanied by Dr. Boris Bogen, who was to be associated with him, as Director of the J.D.C. in Russia, and others who had been selected as members of the Ukrainian Unit, arrived in Moscow the first week in April, where in conference with Haskell details of procedures were worked out.

### CHARACTER OF THE UKRAINIAN FAMINE

In the Ukraine, as along the Volga, many causes joined to make the famine of 1921-22 hideously devastating. Drought, as elsewhere, was the primary, immediate cause. Most acute along the coasts of the Black Sea, the effects of the drought diminished towards the north until at the end of the steppe country and the beginning of the timber growth, rainfall, if not normal, was sufficient.<sup>6</sup> Complicating and rendering the disaster more burdensome were the long series of wars, beginning with the World War and trailing off, through the Polish conflicts and the bitter civil wars, to the period of banditry and lawlessness that lasted to the very time that relief began. Struggles, imperialistic, nationalistic, racial, and social in origin, drenched the land in blood, ruined its farms and fields, closed its mines and factories, and brought on an era of barbarism. The attempt to force military Communism on a stubborn, individualistic peasantry delayed recovery; it did not cause the ruin.

One can gather the extent of the havoc, physical and moral, wrought by this commotion from the fact that between February 1917 and February 1920 the so-called government of the Ukraine—i.e., the power controlling the chief cities,—

<sup>6</sup>The "famine" gubernias were: Odessa, Nikolaiev, Ekaterinoslav, Zaporosh, Donetz. For an account of the Ukrainian economic situation at this time, see W. R. Grove, "Relief Operations in the Ukraine," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXI, 13-36.



changed hands from eleven to thirteen times, the number varying in different cities. Foreigners, with greedy fingers in the pie, contributed to the confusion; Germans and Austrians, and later Poles, from the west; French and Greeks, from the south.<sup>7</sup> But the greatest damage came from the native factions.

Three groups stood out in this three years' struggle for control of the rich Ukrainian lands. First, the Ukrainian Nationalists, socialistic in tendency, but furiously anti-Bolshevik, anti-Russian, and anti-Polish, aiming at an independent Ukrainian State, embracing eastern Galicia and the present Ukraine, and coveting Bessarabia and the Crimea, where their claims on racial, linguistic and historical grounds were questionable.<sup>8</sup> This movement created the Rada, whose youthful representatives caused Trotzky vast annoyance at Brest-Litovsk and who finally signed with the Central Powers the "Bread Peace" from which the half-starved Austrians expected so much and got so little. After many earnest absurdities, which included the establishment of an official language that only a few could understand, and shaved heads after the manner of the XVII Century Zaporosh Cossacks, the Nationalist movement degenerated through the German-supported Skoropadski régime to the Directory and semi-banditry under Petljura, whose alliance with Poland was the preliminary of the Polish invasion and the war of 1920.

Opposing the Ukrainian Nationalists, and vying with them in their hatred of the Poles and the Bolsheviks, was the Russian "White" movement including some thirty odd political groups,—Monarchists, Octobrists, Cadets, Social-Democrats, Trade Unionists, National Socialists, Social Revolutionists and others—the remnants of the parties broken and driven to cover

<sup>7</sup> These events are described in a paper "Civil Wars in the Ukraine," written by a Russian scholar and based on contemporary records and personal observation. This manuscript is in the Hoover War Library.

<sup>8</sup> In fact Ukrainian Nationalism clashed with a similar movement in both these regions, for the Moldavians of Bessarabia and the Tartars of the Crimea were inspired to look up their histories, establish national assemblies, and assert their right of self-determination. These projects came to grief when Rumania swallowed Bessarabia and Denikin's Volunteer Army occupied the Crimean Peninsula. Recently, the Moscow government, which still has hopes of recovering Bessarabia, revived Moldavian nationalism by the creation on the left bank of the Dniester of a Moldavian Socialist Soviet Republic which eventually (it is hoped) will extend across the river and set up its capital at Kishinev. *Izvestia*, November 1, 1924.

by the abler Bolsheviks. From the security afforded by the varying fortunes of Denikin's Volunteer Army, these wordy gentlemen engaged in a savage controversy with the Ukrainian intellectuals. Their barrages of pamphlet and placard passed harmlessly over the heads of the peasants and workers whose fate was at stake, and who suffered impartially from the impressment, the confiscation, and the pillaging of all parties.

The third group, the Bolsheviks, being realists, adjusted the range of their propagandist fire to the real target, the peasants and workers. They followed the tactics they had so successfully employed in Great Russia, promising everything to everyone. Brushing aside the historic trappings of the Ukrainians and abstract arguments of the Russian Democrats, the Communists took a slogan which no one could misunderstand: "All power to the Soviet of workers, peasants, and Red Army deputies. All land to the peasants, all factories to the workers." They even went so far as to take into consideration the feelings of the Nationalists to whom they promised absolute independence in federation with Soviet Russia, and along with this the right to use any language, even the Austrian Galician, which almost no one understood. Here, as elsewhere, the Communists ultimately triumphed over their opponents.

The barrage of propaganda would have been harmless enough, had not the unfortunate people, who understood but dimly, if at all, what the controversy was about, been urged to destroy each other in the support of theories, which the propagandists were alternately expounding and exploding. The more or less organized armed forces of the three groups surged back and forth across the land, leaving a wake of havoc behind them. They were to all intents and purposes in the same situation as the gangs of bandits that operated in their rear and on their flanks. When they moved into a new area they requisitioned everything they needed, from food supplies to recruits. Sometimes they paid for these with currency that was worthless. The bandits followed the same procedure, with the exception that they omitted even the formality of payment. When an army withdrew from a town or area, it destroyed everything of value that it had not requisitioned, to keep it out of the hands of the enemy. Pogroms incredibly horrible were

frequent, the work, it should be noted, not of the Bolsheviks, but of the Nationalists, the Whites, and the bandits.<sup>9</sup>

The effect of this era of lawlessness and pillage on the economic life of the country may be imagined. It was most striking in the cities, of which Odessa furnishes an example. Before the war this was the largest trading center in the South, a beautiful city with a population of 600,000, and, with the exception of Petrograd, the most cosmopolitan and progressive city in all Russia. The business of the Odessa port, greatly curtailed during the World War because of the closing of the Straits, came to an end with the civil wars. Other activities furnishing employment also ceased. The population dropped from 600,000 to 400,000 in three years. Even after political stabilization, the population of the city continued to decrease so that in 1924 it was estimated by a Communist writer as having fallen to 300,000.<sup>10</sup> The signs of decay common in other Russian cities were apparent in Odessa, perhaps in even greater abundance. An official report for 1923 records that at that time over ten per cent of the dwellings of the city had been completely ruined, and an additional five per cent were listed as unfit for habitation. At the rate of decay of the years since the revolution, this report declared that within fourteen years Odessa would be a city of ruins. During the course of the revolution and the civil war, the water system, never adequate, fell into ruins, so that by the time the A.R.A. reached the city, the population was dying, not alone from hunger, but from raging epidemics.

Other Ukrainian cities suffered as did Odessa, though in most cases in a lesser degree, since their control was not such

\* "Zytomir, the nearest government town to Kiev (130 versts distant) did not recognize the Director's (Petljura's) authority from the very beginning, and formed a local Bolshevik Council of soldiers and laborers. The Jews were at the head of this movement. The Directory wishing to enforce obedience by terror, had sent the Penal Division to Zytomir, which organized a massacre (pogrom) of the Jews in January (1919) . . . One part of the Jewish town was surrounded by troops. No one was allowed to enter or leave this quarter. Literally every house or shop belonging to the Jews was destroyed during the course of the following week; the peasants bore away cartloads of plundered goods and effects . . . The inhabitants . . . contend that no less than 200 Jews were killed . . ." From a contemporary report by John Douglas, British Vice-Consul at Kiev, 1919. A multigraphed report circulated by Sir William Goode, British Director of Relief, at the Paris Peace Conference.

<sup>10</sup> *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, February 22, 1924.



an attractive objective to the contending factions. Kiev, second to Odessa in size and importance in the Ukraine, and the cradle of the Russian nation, was less battered and demoralized, although it exceeded the Odessa record of changes in government by at least two occasions, when the city was occupied by the Poles, once in April and May, 1920, and once for a brief period in January, 1919, when the Bolsheviks held the town after a bombardment of eleven days.<sup>11</sup>

Kharkov, because of its proximity to the Donetz industrial basin, possessed proportionately a large industrial population; was, therefore, from the first, more susceptible to Bolshevik propaganda; and was more successfully kept in line by the Communists, who rewarded the city by designating it as the capital of the Ukraine, in the face of the superior claims of Kiev, both from historical precedent and physical equipment.

Doubtless the Ukraine suffered more cruelly than the rest of Russia from the partisan bands that were at first semi-political, but eventually just bandits. The larger cities like Odessa, Kiev, and Kharkov did not suffer particularly from bandits, but the smaller cities, which escaped the undesirable duty of entertaining the contending hosts, were left without the protection of any external authority and became the bandits' prey in the existing confusion. In the provincial towns and cities it was never possible for one to know from one week to the next to what authority the town should turn. For example, at the beginning of 1919 the Ukrainian Directory supported by Petljura was in Kiev, Denikin's Volunteer Army in Odessa, and the Bolsheviks in Kharkov, all claiming authority over the whole region. Civil authority had of course long disappeared and military authority soon followed it. To find a parallel to these conditions it is necessary to go back to the later days of the Thirty Years' War.

The effects of all these disturbances were everywhere apparent to the representatives of the A.R.A. on their arrival. The city of Ekaterinoslav, three years before a thriving, growing city at the rapids of the Dnieper below Kiev, could no

<sup>11</sup> The population in Kiev increased from 248,000 in 1897 to 495,000 in 1915. By 1920, this number had fallen to 366,000. Subsequently according to the 1923 census, the population had risen again to 403,000.

longer be recognized as either prosperous or thriving. Near the railway station stood the once imposing building of the railway administration, now half in ruins, because Makhno, the Anarchist-bandit, after a struggle with Balbaczan, another bandit, had declared that he had no use for railways anyway, and proceeded to demonstrate his contempt for them in a thoroughgoing fashion. Along the well-known Ekaterina Prospect, it seemed that every second house had been demolished. Whole blocks of stores were completely gutted, and such walls as were standing were pockmarked with machine gun bullets. Even the cobblestones of the streets appeared to have responded to the violence of the time, for rocks lay everywhere. There was even more wanton destruction along Novodranskaya Street, where formerly stood the finest homes of the town. All were now in ruins or uninhabitable, though when the A.R.A. arrived the drawing room of the palatial home of a former merchant was still useful as a stable for the horses of a troop of cavalry. As for the others, they had for the most part been occupied at one time or another by institutions of the passing governments, the signs of which were unmistakable in the accumulation of filth, broken windows, fallen plaster, and the absence of all wood trim, long since carried off for fuel.

Besides being the battle ground of factions, the Ukrainian territory, because of its geographical situation as well as its reputed richness, became the Mecca of refugees in flight from war or famine in other regions. The first wave of fugitives came ahead of the retreating army in 1915, when, as a matter of deliberate policy, the Imperial Government forced thousands of peasants to leave their lands in Poland to become wanderers in Central Russia. In 1918, there was another wave, this time from the north, whence thousands fled to escape the oppression of the Bolsheviki, whom they hated and had fought unsuccessfully. In 1921, before the famine became acute in the south, another stream of refugees began to trickle back from the east to the west, when those who had left their homes in the Baltic states began to return. They lived, during the long months of travel, largely by the generosity of the inhabitants of the country through which they passed. Passing

this stream in the opposite direction was still another, by no means negligible, of war prisoners drifting back from the internment camps of central Europe. Greater than all these, however, was the rush of panic-stricken peasants from the Volga, which began in the summer of 1921, as the fields burned and the crops disappeared, and continued in a rising volume like a river in spring, until the arrival of American food checked the flood.

#### SOVIET RELIEF POLICY IN THE UKRAINE

Up to the time the A.R.A. began its activities (January, 1922), neither the Central Government at Moscow nor the Ukrainian at Kharkov had made any serious move to relieve the famine in the south. In fact, the only relief activity which went on in the Ukraine, from the summer of 1921 to the spring of 1922, was the collection, for shipment to the distant Volga, of foodstuffs, for lack of which people along the Black Sea were dying.

The policy of the Communist Party with respect to the Ukraine famine presents many curious aspects. Not only did the Moscow Government fail to bring the Ukrainian situation to the knowledge of the A.R.A., as it did other regions much more remote, but it actively discouraged, as has been noted, anything likely to bring the Americans in contact with the Ukraine. The explanation that the situation along the Black Sea was unknown to the officials of the Central Government is not worth serious consideration. "In July, 1921, the vision of calamitous hunger was seen approaching," says the official report of the government relief committee,<sup>12</sup> and this is not to be wondered at, since, according to the same authority, the previous year had been one of the three driest the country had known since 1840. As in other parts of Russia, the crop gathered in the fall of 1921 was tragically below the normal level. In 1916 it had amounted to 42.6 poods per capita, while in 1921 it had fallen to 8.5 poods. In some sections of the Ukraine it was even less, for example, in the Bolshoi

<sup>12</sup> Tsentralnaia Komissia Pomoshchi Golodaiushchim, *Itogi Borby s Golodom v 1921-22 g.g.* 253 Izd. Tz. K. Pomgol, Moskva Kreml. 1922 g.



Takmak area, where it amounted to seven-tenths of a pood per capita, and in the Odessa Uyezd to two and one-tenth poods.<sup>13</sup> The number officially regarded as "famished" mounted rapidly, and by January, 1922, twelve per cent of the population were so classified. With this spreading fire in their own back yard, the Ukrainian Central Executive Committee had taken energetic steps to put out the fire on their neighbors' premises and, according to their report, "organized a speedy relief to the Volga famine population."<sup>14</sup> The only indication that the writer of the official report saw anything peculiar in this procedure is his remark, in the course of describing the commendable efforts of the Ukrainians in coming to the aid of their Volga brethren, that "in the beginning, owing to the delayed information from districts affected by the famine in the Ukraine itself, the [relief] commission gave all its attention to the relief of the Volga regions."<sup>15</sup>

One arrangement for relief, which was promoted by the All Russian Pomgol (Relief), was that of attaching a gubernia, officially recognized as "famished," to another gubernia in a better situation. The latter province was then supposed to devote its energies to collecting supplies within its own borders for the support of the stricken gubernia attached to it. In this fashion, Samara, Saratov, Uralsk, and Tzaritzin were attached to the Ukraine for relief. To these gubernias, and to the Tartar Republic and the Central Pomgol, the Ukrainian gubernias shipped a total of 1,127 cars of food products between the fall of 1921 and August, 1922. The greatest number of cars, naturally, were dispatched from the most favorably situated Ukrainian provinces. For example, Podolia sent 199 cars, Chernigov, 202, and Kiev, 122.<sup>16</sup> It is astonishing enough that these trainloads of food should have been loaded in Kiev and Poltava and sent hundreds of miles to the hungry along the Volga, instead of being transported a score or so

<sup>13</sup> Decrease in cultivated area from 1916 to 1920 in northern Ukraine, 41 per cent; in southern Ukraine and the Crimea, 42 per cent. Decrease in live stock over the same period northern Ukraine: horses, 25 per cent, cattle, 10.6 per cent, pigs, 0.3 per cent; southern Ukraine and the Crimea: horses, 44 per cent, cattle, 24 per cent, pigs, 41.2 per cent. *Bulletin Statistique publié par l'Administration Centrale Statistique de l'Ukraine*, 1923, No. 2.

<sup>14</sup> Tsentralnaia Komissiiia Pomoshchi Golodaiushchim, *op. cit.*, 257.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 258.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 258.

miles across the gubernia line to Odessa or Nikolaiev, where there was a first class famine in swing. It is even more astonishing, when one learns from this official report that Odessa Gubernia, with a crop of only seventeen per cent of normal, and with people dying of hunger in the streets of its principal town as well as the huts of its villages, sent sixty-five cars to Central Russia, while Nikolaiev, with a crop only four per cent of normal, and containing in the city of Kherson the most desperately afflicted spot in south Russia, in fact, one of the worst in the entire country, sent eight cars to the Volga.<sup>17</sup> Of this the report incredibly says: "It is important to observe that even the famine gubernias sent bread to the Volga regions."<sup>18</sup> It was not till January 11, 1922, that the government officials of the Donetz, one of the starving gubernias, were authorized to discontinue their compulsory collections for the Volga, and, as late as March, 1922, there were still to be seen in the famine districts of Nikolaiev, posters reading: "Workers of Nikolaiev, help the starving of the Volga."<sup>19</sup>

The exhaustion of the remaining resources in the southern provinces, which brought the number of officially "famishing" in the spring of 1922 up to three millions, stirred the Central Pomgol of the Ukraine to renewed activity. It thereupon "undertook the duty of feeding 500,000 people in the Ukraine, and 1,200,000 in the Volga Regions."<sup>20</sup> As a matter of fact, the Pomgol succeeded in doing nothing of the kind in either place, but it is interesting to know that, with three millions of their own people starving, the Ukrainian Government was still bent on devoting two-thirds of its energies and resources to the relief of another section of the country.

<sup>17</sup> It is equally astonishing that the Odessa Relief Committee *bought* 400,000,000 rubles of grain for the Volga. *Russian Information and Review*, November 15, 1921. Published by Soviet Trade Delegation, London. The Ukrainian Social Democratic Labor Party (anti-Bolshevik) declared that the Ukraine was forced to make a famine contribution of 400 cars of supplies, all of which were sent to the Volga. *The Famine in the Ukraine*, pamphlet published by the Executive Committee of the U.S.D.L.P. Berlin, 1923, 15. The authority quoted is the Kharkov newspaper *Visty*, February 18; March 4, 1922.

<sup>18</sup> Tsentralnaia Komissiiia Pomoshchi Golodaiushchim, *op. cit.*, 258.

<sup>19</sup> Captain V. Quisling (of the Nansen Mission in the Ukraine) *La famine en Ukraine*, Geneva, 1922. Summarized in *Bulletin de l'Union Internationale de Secours aux Enfants*, 20 May, 1922.

<sup>20</sup> Tsentralnaia Komissiiia Pomoshchi Golodaiushchim, *op. cit.*, 260.

In addition to the food tax (the Prodnalog), the government collected a civil tax in money, and here also the famine gubernias were not spared. The relatively prosperous gubernias of Volhynia and Chernigov produced taxes of this variety, amounting to 31,000,000 and 40,000,000 rubles (issue of 1922) respectively; starving gubernias of the Donetz, Odessa, and Ekaterinoslav produced 34,000,000, 30,000,000 and 17,000,000, respectively. The official comment on the collection of this tax is interesting: "The workmen and peasants willingly paid these taxes, whereas the non-laboring classes tried to avoid payment, and the authorities were obliged to have recourse to the Revolutionary Tribunal. The trials of the stubborn elements had great moral and political influence on the laboring class, exciting its interest in the relief question."<sup>21</sup>

The Communist Party's Ukrainian famine policy is difficult to explain. One explanation is that those who formulated the policy of the Soviet Government were perfectly aware of the impending famine in the south,<sup>22</sup> though perhaps not aware of its extent, as seemingly they were not in the case of the Volga. They knew, moreover, that of the two, the Volga famine involved a greater area and more people. The policy of ignoring the Ukraine, focussing all efforts on the Volga, may have been a deliberate one, forced by the knowledge that since it was unlikely that there would be enough food to supply both regions, it was better to handle one job well, than to try to handle two and fail. This explanation obviously leaves many things unexplained, among them the policy of making the situation in the Ukraine even worse by removing some of the food that the famine districts had produced and needed.

One cannot escape the feeling that fear or political expediency, or both, influenced the official famine policy in these regions. There are good, though not necessarily conclusive

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, loc. cit.

<sup>22</sup> Although Chicherin's note of August 3, 1921, to all governments omitted the Ukraine from the list of "distressed" regions, the official *Russian Information and Review*, of December 1, 1921, reflecting official statements from Moscow declared that "the Don area, the North Caucasus, and part of the Ukraine have also suffered considerably."



reasons for that feeling. The South, as we know, was the scene of the most tenacious resistance to the Communist power. Moreover in the Ukraine, the system of communal land ownership which was to be found in central and eastern Russia was less general. Instead, the land was owned by individuals and there was a marked tendency in pre-war years, throughout this entire territory, toward increased peasant holdings, through the acquisition by purchase or lease of the landlord's acreage.

The land hunger, so common in central and eastern Russia as to furnish the dynamite for the agrarian upheaval, was felt acutely in the Ukraine only on the right bank of the Dnieper, where there were numerous large estates owned and operated by the nobles. In the steppe region, that is, in the southern gubernias, which in 1921 and 1922 were famine stricken, there was no acute shortage of land, but on the contrary, this region was characterized by the unusual number of large peasant farms which it contained. According to a competent authority<sup>23</sup> who wrote with the approval of the Communist officials at Kharkov, the peasant proprietors throughout the steppe region formed an important factor in the economic prosperity of the country, and were naturally as strongly opposed to the Communist policy of redistribution of the land as were the landed proprietors elsewhere.

This opposition of the peasant landholders to the Communist agrarian policy explains to a certain degree, though of course not wholly, the obstinate persistence of counter-revolutionary activity in the south. A great many of the bandit gangs followed the policy of restricting their murder, arson, and pillage to Communists and Jews. Thus they could count on the support of many of the well-to-do peasants, and these gangs, when pursued by the Cheka and the Red Army, could melt imperceptibly away into the peasant population, leaving no trace of their existence. That such leaders as Makhno were able to continue their operations for so long was due to the hostility of the peasants to the Communists. This sullen opposition the Communists realized, and since according to

<sup>23</sup> V. Katchinsky, *Sketches of the Agrarian Revolution in the Ukraine*, Kharkov, 1922. (In Russian.)

their reasoning, it threatened the revolution, no measure could be too severe to destroy it.<sup>24</sup>

The evidence is not enough to justify assuming that the Communists deliberately turned their backs and allowed the good work to go on, when they saw a terrible catastrophe accomplishing the destruction of the enemies whom they had been unable completely to subdue. But one is perhaps justified in believing that Moscow was, first, not unconscious of the salutary effect of the frightful visitation, and, second, willing to let the Ukraine suffer, rather than take the chance of new uprisings which might follow foreign contact. It is quite clear that neither the Communists of Moscow nor those of Kharkov found their sympathy so aroused by the horrors of the south as by those of the east.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> The Committees of Poor Peasants, created by the Communists in 1918 to break the well-to-do peasants, were abolished in Central and Eastern Russia by 1921, after it was realized that they were useful only for destructive purposes. In the Ukraine, however, they were continued long after the N.E.P. had been established. In the autumn of 1922, Dr. Golder and the writer in the course of an inspection trip in the Ukraine found these Committees of Poor Peasants, rather than the village soviets, exercising an arbitrary authority in the villages.

<sup>25</sup> That the Soviet Government was not averse to the use of the famine for political ends is shown by their successful assault on the Russian Orthodox Church in connection with the confiscation of church treasures for famine relief (Chapter XVII, footnote 13), and the use of foreign famine relief collections for the spread of political propaganda. (Chapter X.)

## CHAPTER XII

### EXPANSION

THE decision to attack the Ukrainian famine not only added a new and very considerable job to the one already undertaken by the A.R.A., but marked the beginning of expansion elsewhere. It seemed as if one famine led to another. For along with the Ukraine came the Crimea, a different government, the Crimean Socialist Soviet Republic, but the same drought, and the same hunger. Then eastward along the Black Sea coast, the Don and the Southeast (i.e., the Cis-Caucasian regions) asked for, and received help. Still later, the A.R.A. crossed the Caucasus range and took, to the republics of Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia, some of the supplies from the Congressional Appropriation, which were distributed by the Near East Relief. There was expansion, also, towards the west in the White Russian Soviet Republic and the neighboring gubernias of Gomel and Vitebsk.

### PROGRESS IN THE UKRAINE

During the winter months of January, February, and March, 1922, the Ukrainian organization took shape and struggled, often with doubtful success, to overcome the handicap of a late and inauspicious start and, in some regions, the continued hostility of officials. The signature of Rakovsky to the A.R.A.-Ukrainian Agreement did not, as was hoped, remove the friction that had harassed the Americans who had gone to the Ukrainian cities to establish Food Remittance stations. The Ukrainian Central Executive Committee did send out an order to all Ukrainian gubernias, warning officials that the work of the A.R.A. was considered of first importance and that all reasonable requests should be carried out within forty-eight



hours. It took time for this order to reach the gubernias, and when it did arrive, it had no remarkable effect. As late as January 25, Hynes, in Odessa, was unable to get any assistance from Uzhny, the official of the Ukrainian Foreign Office through whom he had to deal, because the latter said that he had received no word from his superiors of any agreement—though this had been signed in Moscow two weeks before—nor had he received any instructions to assist the A.R.A. in preparing the port to receive the corn ships. Hynes endeavored to get technical information concerning the port, such as pier length, berthage, and so forth, but Uzhny ordered the port officials not to give this, because he was not sure that the A.R.A. was entitled to it. The information was essential, and Hynes got it, but without the assistance of the Ukrainian representative. Hynes asked the Odessa Health Department for a list of the medicines, hospital equipment, et cetera, that the city's institution needed most, in order that the A.R.A. might furnish them. Uzhny heard of this request and forbade the Health Department to give it.

There were several reasons for this official hostility, which lasted for several months and hindered the progress of relief. There was the same suspicion of the Americans that obtained elsewhere in Russia and was the fruit of the policy shaped at Moscow and of Communist psychology. The sullen hostility of Ukrainian peasants to the Soviet power tended to sharpen and prolong this period of suspicion. Furthermore, in the early days in the Ukraine, the Food Remittance work was the most important activity of the A.R.A. and this category of relief was particularly suspect to the lesser Communists. General feeding and medical relief thawed the official attitude and there was a general improvement all around when Artomonov, an able and experienced administrator, became the principal liaison representative of the Ukrainian Government with the A.R.A. His broad understanding and efficient coöperation were of great value to the A.R.A. and to the cause of relief in the South.

Shortly after the projected child and adult programs became known, the Ukrainian relief officials called a conference of all relief organizations in their territory, which included, in

addition to the government relief organizations, the Ukrainian Red Cross, the Nansen Mission, and the A.R.A. The officials first proposed that all relief supplies coming into the Ukraine be pooled and their distribution handled by a committee, upon which all the organizations were represented. The A.R.A. could not enter such an arrangement, for it was obligated to retain full responsibility for supplies entrusted to it, and to handle them in accordance with its agreements. Furthermore, none of the other bodies was certain of the quantity of supplies it would have at its disposal, a fact which made definite allocations impossible. The A.R.A. expressed its willingness to co-operate fully, and to arrange its campaign so as to avoid duplication with those of the other relief bodies. A scheme was then drawn up, which assigned the gubernias of Donetsk, Nikolaiev, and Odessa, with the exception of the city of Odessa, to the Nansen Mission, and Zaporosh and Ekaterinoslav gubernias, with Odessa city, to the A.R.A. As a matter of fact, this arrangement was not observed, for the supplies upon which the other organizations were counting did not arrive, so that the A.R.A., having supplies, extended its feeding to include all the Ukrainian gubernias, except the industrial section of the Donetsk, from which it was specifically excluded by the Soviet Government.

Colonel Grove and Dr. Bogen, Director General of the J.D.C., reached Kharkov on April 25, 1922, where, in conference with Artomonov, they fixed the tentative allocations for the several subdistricts into which the Ukraine was divided. The subdistrict of Kiev consisted of the gubernia of that name, and the gubernias of Chernigov, Volhynia, and Podolia. Kharkov subdistrict, also a Food Remittance station, embraced the gubernias of Poltava, Kremenchug, and Kharkov. Although the Soviet Government would not allow the A.R.A. to extend its work into the heart of the Donetsk, it did allow relief in the southern section of this gubernia, inhabited largely by German colonists, and to serve this section Grove set up a subdistrict with headquarters at Mariupol. For the Zaporosh gubernia, headquarters were at Alexandrovsk, and for a short time there was another station at Melitopol in the southern part of this gubernia. Odessa and Ekaterinoslav had already

been opened as Food Remittance stations, and the organization in these places took care of the feeding and medical relief. Nikolaiev, also, constituted a subdistrict.

According to the A.R.A.-J.D.C. schedule of March 9, the Ukrainian feeding was to reach its maximum of 800,000 children and 400,000 adults on July 15, 1922. The childfeeding began in Odessa on April 30, five days after the conference with Artomonov, and in the other subdistricts early in May. By dint of the most strenuous efforts on the part of the A.R.A. and the J.D.C. personnel, from Grove and Bogen down, the feeding figures mounted with great rapidity during the following months. By July 15, the number of children being fed was 822,000, exceeding the scheduled number by 22,000. Adult feeding, authorized in the middle of May, was well started by early June; reached nearly 600,000, instead of the scheduled 400,000 by the middle of July; and went over a million on August 1.<sup>1</sup>

In general, the method of procedure was the same as in the Volga, and the difficulties that had to be overcome were of a similar character. By virtue of the fact that they did not begin work until after the winter had broken, the men of the Ukrainian districts were spared many of the worries and the disappointments endured by the men of the Volga. The transportation crisis had passed by the time the Ukraine operation got in full swing, but the A.R.A. pioneers in that territory felt the effect of it. The first shipment of supplies from Moscow to Odessa was completely lost for over a month. MacPherson, A.R.A. Supervisor in Kiev, finally found it in a Kiev warehouse where some railroad official had unloaded it, and then forgotten its existence. Telegrams between Moscow and Odessa took from five to eleven days to make the distance later covered by passenger trains in three days. In general, however, the Ukrainian operations were not seriously handicapped by lack of transport or communication.

<sup>1</sup> For further details of the Ukrainian operation see W. R. Grove, "Relief Operations in the Ukraine," *A. R. A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXI, 13-36. Also Dr. Boris D. Bogen, *Report of the Activities of the Joint Distribution Committee (Relief Administration) "Russia."* November 1, 1922 to October 31, 1923, and *The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee in Russia* (January, 1924). Official publications of the J. D. C.



The Ukrainian work, with its late start, had to be driven through at top speed, if it were to achieve its purpose. For that reason, Grove adopted the slogan, "Feed 'em first," during the first weeks. His object was to cut formalities and red tape; get the food to the distributing centers; and have kitchens running to their full capacity with all speed. The fundamental principles of the A.R.A. work were, of course, followed, but in the first days of feeding in each subdistrict, the usual careful scrutiny of feeding lists was omitted temporarily. Practically all children in the larger towns were in need of nourishing food, and at the commencement of the kitchen operations, almost every child who asked for food and seemed to need it, was given the ration without being required to give any proof of the extent of his need.

In the Ukrainian cities, as everywhere else in Russia, it took a tremendous amount of energy, persistence, and patience to get simple things done. In Odessa, for example, such fundamentals as water and fuel were always giving trouble, and threatening to close the kitchens. The water system had ceased to function during the revolution, and had never been repaired. This forced the kitchens to depend on private water carriers, who were temperamental and unscrupulous, always holding up the kitchens with exorbitant prices. The fuel question in this treeless country was also an acute one, the government never being able to provide enough to keep even its own institutions supplied, to say nothing of the A.R.A. kitchens. To prepare what little food they had, cooks in children's homes tore up the floors of their buildings to make a fire.<sup>2</sup>

Because of the mixture of races and the recent troubled history of the Ukraine, the members of the A.R.A. Committees, and the Government committees exhibited some extraordinary combinations. Perhaps the rarest combination was in a town where anti-Semitic feeling had been, and still was, intense. When Barringer inspected this uyezd, he found that the secretary of the government relief committee was Touchinka, a man of the most repulsive appearance, and a staunch member of the

<sup>2</sup>The writer saw this being done in Odessa; at the same time he saw a Greek ship in Odessa harbor loading for Holland a cargo of wood shipped in from the northern Ukraine. The transaction was in the hands of the Soviet Foreign Trade Delegation.

Communist Party. To every one who would listen, Touchinka boasted that he had, with his own hands, killed more landlords than all the other commissars in his gubernia combined. In a few days, his relief committee went out of business for lack of supplies. Touchinka immediately applied to Barringer for employment, explaining that while it was true that he had done many things considered evil by some—such, for instance, as killing a landlord—he would not steal. This, it proved, was perfectly true, and in due time Touchinka became, along with a fine old Jewish Rabbi, one of the leading lights in the uyezd A.R.A. organization.

Possessing all of Touchinka's vices and none of his virtues, was Tetov, an ex-bandit, now converted to the Communist Party, who ruled with the absolutism of an African chief over Nicopol, a town of about 22,000 on the Dnieper. Nicopol had once thrived, and the uyezd in which it was situated was the richest of the gubernia. War and famine, however, had reduced it to the position of the most destitute and, in the spring of 1922, men seriously believed that the whole uyezd would be depopulated through death and migration. The American who came to Nicopol to make arrangements for the commencement of feeding passed no less than four dead bodies on the way to the Gubispolkom, and saw everywhere the evidence of unbelievable suffering. Tetov's claim to fame in A.R.A. annals is that he succeeded for two or three weeks in preventing the beginning of American feeding, first, by dissolving the A.R.A. distributing committee, then by putting guards around the warehouse to prevent food being issued to kitchens, and finally, when Muir, the American in charge, shoved the guards off and distributed the products himself, by calling a general strike which deprived the kitchens of labor, water and fuel necessary for their operation. Tetov was so ferocious of aspect and demeanor that even the Soviet representative was ineffectual and it required an appeal to Kharkov to secure the removal of this hard-boiled Bolshevik.

Another situation, illustrating another problem, arose in connection with the feeding of the Krivoi Rog uyezd, which was the largest in the Ekaterinoslav district, and contained the

greatest number of starving children. The Krivoi Rog also contained some of the best iron mines in Russia, and played an important part in the industrial life of the country in the old days. Although the government had notified the A.R.A. to keep away from the industrial sections of the Donetz, it had not mentioned the Krivoi Rog. The committees appointed there by the A.R.A. reported that there were ninety thousand needy children, of whom the government would care for ten thousand. The A.R.A. then made an initial allocation of 40,000 rations, and loaded food on the cars for shipment. Just as the trains were about to leave, a wire came from Kharkov, the capital of the Ukraine, saying: "Don't let the A.R.A. feed in Krivoi Rog." A day or so later, a second telegram came which, in explanation of the first, said that the Nansen organization had been assigned to this area, where they would feed 30,000 rations. The local government representative, thereupon, tried to have the shipment for Krivoi Rog sent elsewhere. The American representative objected to this plan, pointing out that the Krivoi Rog was one of the worst sections and, even if the Nansen organization did feed 30,000, there would still remain 50,000 uncared for. Furthermore, no one knew when the Nansen foodstuffs would arrive, and in the meantime, the Krivoi Rog was starving. After the usual argument, the A.R.A. cars went to Krivoi Rog according to schedule, and a few days later permission came to feed in this uyezd for one month only, after which time the A.R.A. kitchens were to be turned over to the Nansen Mission. To this the A.R.A. replied that they would be glad to withdraw whenever it was evident that the Nansen feeding was sufficient to end starvation in the uyezd. The Nansen food supplies arrived, and for six weeks 12,000 children and 18,000 adults were fed by that organization. Meantime, the A.R.A. had been gradually increasing its allocations, and at the end of the six weeks, when the Nansen feeding suddenly ceased, the government, ignoring its former declaration that the A.R.A. must not be allowed in this area, officially requested the Americans to continue their program, which at that time had reached 65,000 children and 55,000 adults.



There never was an official explanation of this maneuver. People of the Krivoi Rog said the government was unwilling to have the workers in mines, who had been starving for four years, receive help from the Americans, and for political reasons preferred to have the Nansen organization there.<sup>3</sup> It was true that the feeling of this particular uyezd was bitterly hostile to the Communists. There were numerous bandit gangs operating there, who made a specialty of holding up trains, shooting commissars, and robbing rich Jews. These bandits never molested the A.R.A. food supplies. Once, when they robbed an A.R.A. warehouse manager of money, they courteously sent the A.R.A. a receipt for the amount they had taken.

As compared with the feeding operations, the distribution of medical and hospital supplies was usually carried out with less difficulty. Those with whom the A.R.A. physicians had to deal were in most cases doctors, whose interest in their work was professional rather than political, and who as a rule possessed more intelligence than the small officials. This was not always the case, for in some cities, for example Odessa, it was impossible for a professional man of any standing to serve as the chief of the health department.

In medical as well as food relief, strange improvisations were resorted to in getting things done. In Alexandrovsk, Dr. Caffey, the A.R.A. district physician, found himself unable to get his medical supplies transported from the railway cars to the warehouse, whence he could distribute them to both the city and country hospitals, which were ready to send their own transportation for the supplies as soon as Caffey had them in the warehouse. After a week of struggles with the officials, Caffey took the matter into his own hands and sought out the chief of the fire department, whom he found in bed recovering from the effects of a banquet the night before. The chief's first reaction to the suggestion that his fire department become a trucking agency for the A.R.A. was violently negative. He

\* The explanation of this incident as well as the exclusion of the A. R. A. from the industrial areas of the Donetz and of Birsik in the Ufa District seems to be the official fear that the support of the industrial workers by foreign relief of bourgeois origin might alienate or dilute the loyalty of these workers on whose support Soviet power rested. The Nansen relief was distributed through the Soviet.

would, however, listen to reason, and after he became more used to the idea, began to look upon it with less hostility, while when he was promised a gift of three pounds of sugar, his opposition vanished. Thus on the following day the citizens of Alexandrovsk were rather startled when the clatter and clamor which they usually associated with fires, signified merely the arrival of the first A.R.A. medical supplies in the warehouse of their city.

Reference has been made to the intensity of racial feeling in the Ukraine, and an incident will illustrate how it touched relief. In accordance with the understanding with the J.D.C., the A.R.A. was to make every effort to have it known that the relief being delivered was supplied by the funds furnished by the J.D.C. It was arranged, therefore, that on the kitchens, in addition to the usual A.R.A. sign, there should be the statement "This kitchen is supported by funds of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee." The Soviet Plenipotentiary gave his hesitant consent to the use of this sign, but within a week trouble began. It proved to be impossible to keep the signs up. The kitchen managers began to take the signs in at night, but even that was not sufficient to protect them. The signs were torn down whenever they were left unguarded. Presently local government representatives requested that the signs be removed, although they admitted that the central government had agreed to their use and to the words they contained. The A.R.A. men said that they could not remove the signs until authorized by their superiors to do so, whereupon the government sent out secret orders that the signs be taken down in the interest of public safety.

As in the regions of the Volga, as soon as the stream of American food began to pour into the largest centers of the population and flow into the scattered villages in a steadily increasing volume, the famine in the Ukraine was broken. The effects of the calamity remained. There were cases of undernourishment, pitiful destitution, and here and there of desperate hunger, but starvation no longer exacted its frightful daily toll of death. The panic was quelled, and hope revived.

THE CRIMEA <sup>4</sup>

Like its larger brother in the North, the Crimean Republic received scant attention from the central Soviet relief authorities at Moscow, although as early as the summer of 1921, there were unmistakable signs of difficult days ahead. Unlike some of the other famine regions, the Crimea did not suffer particularly from crop failure in 1920, and in some uyezds, the harvest was above the average. In the whole Crimean peninsula there was in that year a surplus of around seven millions of poods. Although this territory escaped some of the afflictions of other regions, it had afflictions of its own no less severe. These, as in the Ukraine, were largely political.<sup>5</sup>

The first Russian revolution in the spring of 1917 gave to the Crimean Tartars what seemed a heaven-sent opportunity. Encouraged by the Germans and the Turks, they drew forth from their hiding places weapons long concealed, and sallied out from their drab and silent villages to form the Tartar state that they had dreamed of. At the same time another sort of revolution took place on the ships of the Imperial fleet on the Black Sea. The sailors took no interest in the nationalist aspirations of the Tartars and, having disposed of their officers by barbaric, but effective, means went ashore to show the Tartars their proper place. In such districts as Sevastopol, Simferopol and Yalta, where the Tartars predominated, there were bloody collisions. In spite of the sailors, however, a Tartar nationalist government of a sort was established towards the end of December, 1917, supported by Tartar volunteers and officers of the old army. The new government began soon to have its troubles, for by the middle of January, bands of Red Guards from the North crossed the

<sup>4</sup> The Crimean Soviet Socialist Republic embraces merely the peninsula of that name and is therefore less extensive than the old Taurida Gubernia from which it was formed. The area of the C.S.S.R. is about 15,000 square miles and its population about 650,000 of whom Russians and Ukrainians constitute 45 per cent, Tartars 34 per cent, Germans 6 per cent, Jews 5 per cent. The chief pursuit of the people is agriculture, the chief crops being cereals, fruit, and tobacco. Crimean wine is the best produced in Russia. The south shore of the peninsula was, in the old days, a famous resort and one of the palaces of the Czar was at Livadia near Yalta.

<sup>5</sup> "The American Relief Administration in the Crimea" by P. Tracy Kohl and Edward Fox.



isthmus into the Crimea, and with the help of the sailors of the Black Sea fleet, drove out the Tartar government. But upon hearing the heavy steps of German troops marching through the Ukraine, the Bolsheviks disappeared, after skirmishing at Perekop.

The period preceding the German occupation was one of terror, when all security had vanished, for in addition to the Red Guards, the sailors, the Tartar detachments, there came out of the mountains bands of terrorists, known as the "Greens," well armed, who under Anarchist black banners, raided the cities and countryside. Committees of safety were organized to prepare for the coming of a stable government, which did not come. In a little seaside resort, Soudac, during the week before Palm Sunday, 1919, the government changed every day, until finally, on Sunday, the churchgoers returning from church with lighted candles were tickled with palms, according to the old Russian custom, by good-natured German soldiers. At first the Germans were regarded with suspicion, but the order and tranquillity that they brought soon raised them into favor.

The defeat of the Germans in the west ended the rule of their puppet, the Tartar General Sulkevitch, as it ended that of Skoropadski in the Ukraine, but by this time the Volunteer Army of Denikin had become powerful in the peninsula, and a new government, called the Crimean Frontier Government was set up. Then came the second invasion by the Bolsheviks, this time with a better organized Red Army. They defeated the Tartars and the Volunteer Army at Perekop, and the latter was forced to withdraw to the vicinity of Kertch, where under the guns of British and French warships, it held off the Reds during the winter. Denikin's drive north, in the summer of 1919, sent the Reds once more scurrying out of the Crimea, but by March, 1920, the remnants of the Volunteer Army were straggling back into the Crimea to be reorganized for another futile thrust by Baron Wrangel. The Wrangel ascendancy in the peninsula lasted until the autumn in 1920, when, after his disastrous defeat at Perekop, he embarked his supporters and left the peninsula to its fate. The Bolsheviks proceeded, with the thoroughness which has kept them in power, to destroy

whatever remained that was likely to challenge them, and under their guidance the Crimean Socialist Soviet Republic was set up.

Besides the devastation brought by the army and the outlaw bands, the Crimea suffered further from an inundation of refugees from the north. These refugees for the most part were of the classes particularly persecuted by the Bolsheviks. They were demoralized by their suffering, and tended to complete the demoralization of the population with whom they mingled. Finally, in the midst of anarchy in the villages and debauchery and corruption in the cities, there came a raging epidemic of spotted typhus, which made its devastating progress through the armies and the overcrowded towns.

The combination of army operations and Communist tax requisitions wiped out the seven million poods surplus of 1920, and more besides, so that the sowing for the crop of 1921 was much below average. Then came the hot dry months of summer which completed the disaster. The crops were indeed pitiful. According to local estimates the gross yield was only about 2,500,000 poods, or ten per cent of that of the previous year. Of this two and a half millions poods, the government, basing its tax on the yields of the previous year, endeavored to collect a million poods, but failed to gather more than 330,000.<sup>6</sup> The activities of the tax collectors were bitterly resented, and here and there along the roads was occasionally found the body of a man, whose mouth was stuffed with straw. The peasants had given to one more tax collector the fate they believed he deserved.

As early as August, 1921, things were beginning to look bad, but on the 13th of this month, on the inspiration of Moscow, a committee was formed in Simferopol to aid the starving along the Volga. This inattention to troubles at home could not long persist in the face of the increasing number of starvation deaths, which in the month of December had, according to official reports, amounted to two thousand. The hunger in the cities became particularly acute, due to the influx of peasants from their ruined farms. Early in December, the Crimean

<sup>6</sup> These and other data relating to the famine in the Crimea were secured from local official sources by P. T. Kohl and Edward Fox and were included in their general reports of the Crimean activity of the A.R.A.

government formed a relief committee, this time to fight the famine at home, and immediately appealed to the Central Government to recognize this territory officially as famine stricken. Such official recognition would mean relief from taxes and from making famine collections for other regions. Moscow, however, did not act until the middle of February, while the Crimeans fought energetically without assistance from their own central government or from any foreign relief.

The A.R.A. came first in contact with the Crimea, not through the medium of Moscow or the government relief officials, but incidentally, in connection with the transportation of the supplies purchased through the Congressional Appropriation. The use of the Crimean port of Theodosia has been mentioned in an earlier chapter. The arrival of two Americans, on February 28, 1922, and the great ship with corn a few hours later was presently the cause of bitter disappointment to those Crimean people who saw it berth. The corn was for the Volga region, not for the Crimea.

Neither the A.R.A. port officials in Theodosia, nor the headquarters in Moscow were approached by the Crimean or the Moscow authorities to divert relief to the Crimea. The Crimean Government did approach J. N. Brown, the A.R.A. representative, with the proposition that the A.R.A. assist it in making a purchase abroad of five million dollars' worth of food supplies and seed.<sup>7</sup> The A.R.A. used its good offices to put the authorities in touch with American concerns who could handle this affair. Legal and other obstacles delayed the negotiations and the Crimeans made their purchases elsewhere. With those funds which it possessed the local government during the spring established relief work, but there was still need especially among the children and in the hospitals and other institutions. With the approval of the central Soviet authorities, therefore, the A.R.A. undertook to extend its operations into the Crimea, which did not represent a great addition to the relief program, for the total population of the peninsula was only about 600,000. It established feeding, food remittance, and medical work there on May 13, 1922. Amicable relations with the local Crimean officials were quickly estab-

<sup>7</sup> Chapter VI, footnote 26.



lished and maintained. But the liaison officials sent down from Moscow by Eiduk brought much trouble in their train. Medical relief, institutional and adult feeding made good progress, but open kitchens met opposition from Eiduk's men and no satisfactory progress was made in this department of relief until after Lander had succeeded Eiduk at Moscow and a liaison official animated by a different spirit appeared at Simferopol. Feeding began in the month of June and reached its peak of 95,300 in July. The second year in the Crimea was a notably successful one. The Catholic Mission, affiliated with the A.R.A., carried out an effective program in the regions about Eupatoria, while the A.R.A. concentrated its work in the south. Fox, the District Supervisor, received the friendliest collaboration from the Crimean authorities.<sup>8</sup>

#### THE DON REGION AND THE SOUTH EAST <sup>9</sup>

The establishment of an A.R.A. district organization at Rostov on the Don, the capital of the Don Gubernia, was for the double purpose of a Food Remittance station, to cover the broad territory of the north Caucasus and the Don, and as a control point for the railway shipments that were made in the spring of 1922 from Novorossisk to the Volga. The A.R.A. became established in this city on January 13, 1922, and for the next two months the Americans there employed their energies in tracing and following up rail shipments, and in starting the Food Remittance deliveries over a territory of a hundred and ten thousand square miles. The Rostov A.R.A. organization did not, until the following year, conduct any general child-feeding operations. Feeding was done in the northern uyezds of the Don and in parts of the north Caucasus, but this was handled by the A.R.A. Tzaritzin District. The

<sup>8</sup> The Crimean troubles are partly, perhaps largely, attributable to the fact that this region, the scene of much of the Denikin and Wrangel counter-revolutionary activity was regarded as dangerous by Moscow, hence the relief liaison officials were chosen for their ability to keep the A.R.A. in its place, rather than to aid relief. Eiduk's first ambassador announced himself as "first, a general of the Red Army; second, a member of the Communist Party; and third, a relief official."

<sup>9</sup> This territory included roughly the old gubernias of the Don Cossacks, the Kuban, and Stavropol; an area of about 70,000 square miles with a population of some 5,500,000. It is normally a great grain producing region.

problem of refugees and the related problem of institutions was perhaps as serious in Rostov as in some of the famine areas, although the food shortage in this section was not so acute. The medical program, which was pushed rapidly during spring and early summer, reached practically all the institutions in the larger cities of this area. Soup kitchens were established primarily to handle the refugee flow, which continued until American food began to reach the hungry sections from which these refugees were coming.

In spite of the fact that the A.R.A. work in this section was primarily concerned with Food Remittances, the higher Communist authorities of the Don Gubernia, and particularly the president of the Executive Committee, gave sympathetic, whole-hearted coöperation. The President, in fact, during the early stages of the work was so considerate as to call on Hodgson at the A.R.A. office at frequent intervals to offer his assistance and to find out the needs of the Americans.

### TRANSCAUCASIA

The desire of the Transcaucasian Soviet republics, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia <sup>10</sup> to participate in the relief afforded by the Congressional Appropriation was communicated to the A.R.A. by the Near East Relief Committee, which had been aiding these countries since 1919. To establish the relative need of these states, as compared with the famine regions of the Ukraine and eastern Russia, the A.R.A. sent Hutchinson and Golder, who had completed their survey of the other affected regions, to investigate Transcaucasian conditions. They made this survey between February 10 and March 5, 1922.<sup>11</sup>

The three Transcaucasian republics normally produced barely enough foodstuffs for their own support. This rendered them susceptible to very slight climatic changes, or to

<sup>10</sup> Georgia has an area of about 25,000 square miles with a population of 300,000. It produces some cereals and subtropical products, copper and oil, and has the greatest manganese deposits in the world. Azerbaijan (area 34,000 square miles, population 3,000,000) produces a few cereals and possesses the oil wells of Baku. Armenia (15,000 square miles, 1,200,000 population) has neither agricultural nor mineral wealth in any considerable degree.

<sup>11</sup> L. Hutchinson, and F. A. Golder: "Investigation of Food Conditions in Transcaucasia." *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXIV, 2-8.

anything which reduced the productivity of the agricultural industry. Luckily these states had escaped the drought of 1921, and, except in parts of Armenia, the rainfall had been normal. Other afflictions, frosts, locusts, floods, et cetera, had lowered production, but only slightly; in Georgia, from 55-60 poods per dessiatine to 50; in Azerbaijan, from 45-50 to 42; in Armenia, from 50-60 to 45.

Political, rather than natural causes were responsible for the situation which Hutchinson and Golder found. The Caucasus with its oil and mineral wealth was a prize for which the armed forces of half a dozen nations fought like dogs over a bone, and the unhappy inhabitants knew little peace or security after the fall of the Czar's power. The turmoil continued even after Bolshevik supremacy had been established. In 1920-1921, there were the so-called "Menshevist Wars," struggles of moderates against both Denikin's "Whites" and the Russian "Reds" that agitated Georgia and Azerbaijan, while in Armenia the Turks, driven from regions they had occupied, carried off everything they could move, leaving the Armenians their barren hills and narrow valleys, but little else. These disturbances, and the fear of requisitioning, reduced the planted area in Georgia by 23 per cent; in Azerbaijan by 32 per cent; in Armenia by 56 per cent. The best estimates placed the number of "starving," i.e., those in need of immediate help, at 150,000 in Armenia, and 50,000 to 60,000 each in Georgia and Azerbaijan. In addition, the Caucasus had to support a good many refugees; 20,000 to 25,000 from the Volga, 150,000 from Turkey, and 35,000 from Mesopotamia. The latter, however, the British had agreed to care for. Then there was the Russian Red army of occupation, numbering, some said 20,000, others 150,000, which demanded and got food.

Yet, when all these matters were considered, the conditions, as Hutchinson and Golder wrote, were "so much less serious than in Russia or the Ukraine that they are hardly worthy of mention in the same connection. The area and the population affected are relatively insignificant." Nevertheless there was need, and the A.R.A., on the recommendation of its investigators, allocated 6,000 tons of corn grits for feeding, and secured the consent of the Soviet Government to divert to Batum



5,000 tons of rye which the A.R.A. had purchased in America for the Soviets. The consignment of corn grits was to be turned over to A. E. Yarrow, the capable Director General of the Near East Relief in the Caucasus, and the rye to Soviet officials. To effect this transfer when the supplies arrived on the S.S. *Deepwater*, McSweeney, an A.R.A. representative, sailed from Novorossisk on the U. S. destroyer *Childs*.<sup>12</sup> He announced his arrival and his object by wireless, and asked for entry and berthage for the destroyer. The reply came back that McSweeney might land, but the destroyer must keep outside the port. A second message followed, warning the destroyer that an attempt to enter the port would be regarded as an hostile act. The launch of the Marine Cheka finally came out and solved the difficult problem of how McSweeney could land to turn over foodstuffs to the Soviet officials, while they refused to permit his boat to enter the port. The *Deepwater*, with the corn grits and rye, made port May 21, 1922, and, after a little further skirmishing, the cargo was discharged.

#### WHITE RUSSIA, GOMEL AND VITEBSK <sup>13</sup>

The A.R.A. went to the city of Minsk, the capital of the White Russian Soviet Republic, and to Vitebsk early in January, 1922, and to Gomel the following month. The operations contemplated in establishing these district offices included only the delivery of Food Remittance packages and medical relief. The Food Remittance business in these localities was large for the same reason as in the Ukraine. The White Russian Republic and the neighboring gubernias had been within the Jewish Pale and had sent large numbers of emigrants to America. The central government of Moscow was, during the year 1921-1922, opposed to general feeding in this section, contending rightly that since conditions were not comparable to

<sup>12</sup> Denis McSweeney, "Smuggling Relief into Batum," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XLI, 22-27.

<sup>13</sup> J. I. Maitland, "The A.R.A. in Gomel," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXV, 47-56; E. J. Remey, "The A.R.A. in Vitebsk," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXIX, 30-33. White Russia and the neighboring gubernias of Vitebsk and Gomel have a total area of about 63,000 square miles and a population of 5,300,000. All three are in the "consuming," rather than the "producing" part of Russia.

those in the Volga, general relief operations there were not justified. The central government had even objected to the J.D.C. sending food to Minsk for distribution in institutions by the American Friends. The story of these three districts, therefore, is primarily a part of the Food Remittance operation, but as ultimately some feeding was done here, and as a good deal of miscellaneous relief was afforded through the system of group Food Remittances, one may here tell briefly of the beginning of this work, which was contemporaneous with the first feeding in the Ukraine.

These western districts had suffered from all the ills that had afflicted the other parts of Russia, except the final catastrophe of drought. Agriculture throughout these sections normally stood on a low level. The soil was poor and light; and the landholdings of those who still remained in the mir averaged only from two to five dessiatines (5.4 to 13.5 acres) per family. But such holdings were, considering the low productivity of the soil, quite inadequate to support a family, and this condition forced the peasants into other occupations during part of the year. The only successful agriculture, aside from that practiced on the estates of landlords, was on the farms of homesteaders, who had taken advantage of the Stolypin land law in 1907 and broken away from the mir. They had gradually increased their possessions until they ranged from 10-14 dessiatines (27 to 37.8 acres), which were cultivated with skill and intelligence, unusual in this territory.<sup>14</sup> These peasant landowners and the landlords, both of whom were wiped out by the revolution, had produced such agricultural prosperity as there was.

As early as 1915, White Russia began to suffer from military operations. Ten per cent of the land was left untilled; the yield fell from 80 to 120 poods per dessiatine to less than 60; and the great demands of the troops for meat reduced the number of cows, sheep, and pigs over fifty per cent. There was no labor to work the land of the large farms and estates, and the owners soon gave up in despair and moved away. Then came the first revolution of 1917, with the peasant uprising

<sup>14</sup> These and other data relating to the region are from local official records and the observations of competent persons who saw these changes take place.

and senseless destruction that was common throughout Russia. A period of order and relative calm prevailed during the eight months of German occupation. The area of cultivated land increased again, and peasants received some benefit through the importation of cheap German machinery. With the withdrawal of the Germans, the country passed under Soviet rule and was the scene of extensive experiments with Soviet farms, by means of which the government planned eventually to communize the peasantry. The farms failed.

In 1919 and 1920, there were more armies marching over this territory in the course of the Polish wars. During the Polish occupation, the landlords, who had been driven out in 1917, returned, not to settle down, because they had no faith in the permanence of this occupation, but to recover as much as they could of the property that had been taken from them, and to dispose of it as advantageously as possible before leaving with all speed for western Europe. With the end of the Polish war, the Communists were again in control of White Russia. They proceeded to extend the field of their agricultural experiments until they had so many estates set aside as Soviet farms that twenty-five per cent of all the land was in this category. These Soviet farms had even less chances of success than formerly, for much of the stock had been carried off, the premises looted, and the buildings damaged. What little of value remained and was movable, the landlords had carried off. The Soviet farms, far from producing anything to support the cities, became an expensive liability on the government treasury.

When the Americans reached Minsk in January, 1922, they found that the authorities, like the other provincial officials, were unaware of the nature of the agreement made by the Moscow government with the A.R.A., and had not been informed as to what the A.R.A. proposed to do, or as to what its status was to be. Like the Ukrainians, the officials of the White Russian Soviet Republic stood for a few days on their rights as an independent state, informing the Americans that an agreement with the R.S.F.S.R. did not necessarily mean an agreement with White Russia. The White Russians, however, did not maintain this position with the same per-



sistence as the Ukrainians, and hence it was not necessary to negotiate a separate agreement with the White Russian Republic.

The first six months in Minsk, as in Vitebsk and Gomel, were hard ones, full of disappointment and disillusionment for the Americans. The officials were either hostile to the Food Remittance work, or utterly indifferent to it, and made no serious effort to assist the Americans, even in such fundamental matters as the securing of warehouses, offices, and places to live. This was particularly true of Minsk and Vitebsk. Even the beginning of medical relief and, in the case of Minsk, the feeding of a large number of refugees, brought no improvement in relations. Until the autumn of 1922, when the A.R.A. embarked on its new program, the Americans in these cities were still engaged in their interminable debate with the authorities on the subject of buildings which were large enough to accommodate the A.R.A. offices and other buildings which were fit to live in.

In Gomel, the gubernia authorities were at first extremely anxious to be agreeable and all went well, until a liaison representative appeared, who had been sent down by Eiduk's office to make matters easier for the A.R.A. With his arrival troubles began, and continued as long as he was on the ground to prevent direct relations with the head of the gubernia, who was an able and broad-minded young Communist.

The question of personnel was an acute one in the early days at Vitebsk. A few months before there had been a Polish Mission in the city, and on its departure a number of local people who had been employed by it, were arrested and executed. This, being generally known, was not an inducement to employment with any other foreign mission. Those who did present themselves for employment were for the most part Jews who had lived in America and were at the moment agents of the local government, but had no special qualifications for relief work. The man eventually secured as manager of the warehouse was an opera singer, who taught in the conservatory when his duties with the A.R.A. permitted.

The delivery of the first Food Remittance packages was an

event of importance to the community, and of vital importance to the fortunate families who received them. These people could not believe that the packages were to be turned over to them without charge. An old peasant woman, on receiving her package in the office at Gomel, dug down into her clothes and produced three eggs, which she rolled across the counter to the clerk. The gratitude of the beneficiaries, both to Providence and to the employees of the A.R.A. frequently interfered with the work being done. A large group of kneeling figures, offering their prayer of thanksgiving in an office that was always overcrowded, usually complicated matters, and the attempts of the grateful people to embrace the clerks and the warehouse men were disrupting, even in a country where embracing is more common than in America.

The feeding of refugees,<sup>15</sup> which began in Minsk early in May, became an extremely important part of the relief work there, and of vital importance to the unhappy people who were being returned to Poland and the Baltic states from their long exile in the depths of Russia. The evacuation of these people, which began in the midst of the famine and from points as far east as the Urals, was a terribly cruel procedure. Perhaps there was no other way, for these unfortunates would have starved had they remained in Russia. It is doubtful, however, if their suffering could have been greater than on the refugee trains. They were herded in box cars like cattle, with no means of keeping warm, and with insufficient food for a journey of even a week, while the trip took months. There were interminable delays at way stations and junctions points where there was no food, and hundreds died. At each stop the cars were opened and the dead removed, minus their clothing, which was appropriated by those who remained alive. This mingling of the sick, the dead, and the living was the refugees' lot, as the trains crawled with incredible deliberation from one station to another. Minsk was the last Russian station on the line to Warsaw and there the refugees were transported across the border to Poland. There was, of course, great congestion

<sup>15</sup> Sidney Brooks, "Refugees at Minsk and A.R.A. Work"; *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXVIII, 51-57.

here and disease was rife. The refugee feeding, along with the delousing operations, hospitalization, and general sanitation carried on by the A.R.A. Medical Division made life a little less horrible for the refugees and protected both Poland and White Russia from the spread of typhus.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> See Chap. XVIII.



PART III

AFTERMATH OF THE FAMINE

1922-1923



## CHAPTER XIII

### NEW CONDITIONS—NEW PROGRAMS

THE early and midsummer months of 1922 saw the A.R.A. machine running swiftly, smoothly, efficiently.<sup>1</sup> Trains and cargo boats gave increasingly good service under the able administration of Djerjinsky. Relations with the government were more cordial, especially at Moscow, where Eiduk, on June 27, had been relieved as Plenipotentiary. His successor, Karl Lander, was a totally different type of person, courteous, and capable. Like Eiduk he was a Lett, a good Communist, and a graduate of the Cheka, but his training in the latter had not removed his sense of proportion. He upheld the point

<sup>1</sup>In an interim report to President Harding, dated July 16, 1922, Hoover summarized the use by the A.R.A. of the Congressional appropriation (which had expired July 1, 1922), and funds from other sources. The total funds mobilized by the A.R.A. up to that time were approximately \$59,498,000. The total supplies (cereals, beans, peas, special seeds, preserved milk, sugar, fats, cocoa, medical, clothing, and miscellaneous supplies) amounted to 788,878 tons. Concerning distribution Hoover said: "They (the American and Russian personnel of the A.R.A.) were conducting 15,700 kitchens and distributing stations, feeding in round numbers about 3,250,000 children and 5,300,000 adults, a total of about 8,550,000 persons. This number will somewhat increase up to the harvest. It is of course impossible to state the number of lives saved; it may be larger than the figures imply because, if it had been necessary to divide the native supplies amongst all those fed by the A.R.A., additional numbers would have been starved before harvest; theoretically if 10 persons have 2 months' food, all are likely to die in 4 months, whereas, if 5 are fed from the outside, all would survive. The medical supplies have enabled the great typhus, typhoid, small-pox, and famine fever epidemics to be kept under measurable control . . . I am advised by our Russian staff that the Relief Administration is now reaching all accessible persons whose lives are in jeopardy and that the loss of life directly due to starvation ceased some time since, although most every one in Russia is hungry. There was considerable loss of life early in the winter which would have been much abated had the Russian railways been able to transport the large surplus of supplies which the American Relief Administration maintained in Russian ports . . . The other American organizations mentioned above as doing their own distribution are providing for approximately 100,000 persons. In addition to the American effort our advices indicate that about 400,000 persons are being supported by the combined effort of the other countries of Europe. The total contribution of all such countries amounts to about \$5,000,000 and the total supplies they have shipped to Russia have been about 45,000 tons." This report is given in full in Appendix A, Doc. XVII.



of view of his government staunchly enough, yet he could and did see the viewpoint of the A.R.A. and was fully aware of famine relief exigencies. To the A.R.A. he gave coöperation in place of obstruction and in his work as Government Relief Plenipotentiary, Lander was a true friend and servant of the Russian people.

With the two great obstacles removed—transport jams and government interference—the feeding curve climbed rapidly. In June, the number being fed was 7,321,991; in July, 8,966,892; and in August, the high-water mark of 10,491,297 was attained. During the same period the Food Remittance had reached full momentum, and in one summer month the value of the average daily deliveries was \$32,100—enough to feed 9,630 persons for a month. This also was the period of great accomplishment by the Medical Division, which in the month of July alone shipped to the distributing points 129 carloads of supplies. In addition to the equipment of hospitals with every description of supplies from beds to pills, it found time to set up free clinics and dispensaries and to push through a gigantic inoculation campaign which during the summer reached a total of 7,000,000.

### BY-PRODUCTS

With the distribution machinery running smoothly, the Americans could divert some of their energies to the highly important by-products of relief. The "spring cleaning" campaign went merrily on, to the disgust of a good many "beneficiaries" whose ideas of sanitation and order were oriental rather than western. Along with the scrubbing up went other works more ambitious and psychologically more important. These pertained to the repair and reconstruction of public facilities, and they were important because they were the first constructive activity in many regions since the war. Furthermore, they gave the first opportunity in a very long time for persons not in the government to exercise initiative in public service.

Among the Communist rulers of cities and towns there were relatively few enlightened despots. They were fearful men, jumpy, flying off into violence on very slight provocation, and,

so insecure had been their hold on power that they were suspicious of the most innocent acts. They could not, and would not, tolerate any initiative in public affairs by non-party men. They argued that such activities were dangerous, for they might cloak more sinister plots. Moreover, such proceedings constituted a reflection on the efficiency of the Communist Party, which could not be tolerated. Thus nothing was done. Commissars were overworked with making speeches, keeping watch on power, making requisitions to keep the government going, and had neither means, nor often ability, to stem the process of decay that worked relentlessly in every town. Public buildings, schools, private establishments, water supply, hospitals, one after another fell into ruins. Bridges collapsed, canals filled up, wharves rotted and sank. Decay, disintegration, despair were everywhere.

Opportunity to take part in constructive activities, as in the general relief work of the A.R.A., played an exceedingly important part in the spiritual revolution which took place during this year. It is paradoxical that in the midst of the worst famine of their history, the Russians should begin to emerge, blinking and hesitant at first, into the light of hope from the sullen blackness of utter despair. The chief cause, of course, was the breaking of the shackles of Military Communism<sup>2</sup> with the establishment of the New Economic Policy. That one could buy a box of matches in the bazaar or a pood of flour from a peasant without being liable to arrest, indefinite imprisonment, or even death, had a vast personal significance.<sup>3</sup> That one could find employment outside the Soviet bureaucracy, receive wages, be unmolested, and at the same

<sup>2</sup> The term "Military Communism" was originated in Russia to describe Communist policy from the revolution to the adoption of the New Economic Policy. It is discussed in Chapter XXI.

<sup>3</sup> This revival of the spirit in those so long cowed by suffering and terror seemed a hopeful sign to foreigners who observed it. But not to the Communist fundamentalists who saw in it a revival of bourgeois ideals that threatened to undo all that Communist propaganda had accomplished. The newspapers in the summer of 1922 were full of the new menace and the call went out to the faithful to rally on the "ideological front" and save the revolution once more. The culmination of this ideological war was the deportation without trial of a considerable number of eminent Russian scholars, writers, and scientists whom the government feared might become foci of the new spirit. Professor Sorokin, one of the deportees, vividly describes this incident in his book, *Leaves from a Russian Diary*, 299-301. New York, 1924.

time serve his neighbors, as was possible in relief work, gave a further stimulus to broken spirits. Foreign relief, moreover, signified that Russia was not forever ostracized and forgotten by the world, and this, to a very large number of Russians, was of more importance than Americans are likely to realize.

The A.R.A. was in a splendid position to utilize the intelligence of those who had it, and the physical power of the unemployed. The different A.R.A. districts employed all sorts of methods of procedure. In general, the first step was to win official permission for activities of this kind and to impress the officials with their importance. Often, it was unbelievably difficult to make the officials realize that a little energy devoted to a particular kind of improvement would do incalculable good. For example, in Samara, there was one of the most important laboratories in Russia for the manufacture of vaccines and serums, which in these days of epidemics were desperately needed. The laboratory had ceased to produce, because there was no forage for the animals needed for inoculation, there were no funds to pay the personnel, and there was general inertia. Dr. Foucar, the A.R.A. district physician, recognizing the tremendous value of such an institution in the fight against epidemics, began to hammer at the officials of the gubernia for such elementary necessities as fuel and water and forage. If the government would do this much for the institution, the A.R.A. promised to supply it with such laboratory equipment as it lacked, and to assist the personnel by gifts of food packages. Under constant pressure the Samara government finally succeeded in meeting its part of the bargain, and with the arrival of laboratory equipment, the Americans had the satisfaction of seeing this important medical institution back on its feet, performing a vital service. In some places, where official disapproval of the cleansing and disinfecting activities was most obstinate, the authorities allowed the Americans to pursue their absurd obsession up to a certain point. There they stood firm on their prejudices. For instance, in Orenburg, the cleanup gangs gathered the rubbish from the houses, yards, and wells, and made huge piles in the streets. Thereupon negotiations were begun with the government for the removal of these piles. But to no effect. The Orenburg officials



thought but little of this house cleaning, regarding it as a new evidence of American madness, and so far as they were concerned were content to let the piles of refuse remain where they stood. Eventually grass began to grow on the piles, and when the Americans left the district, they felt that in these mounds, if nowhere else, would remain monuments of their activity.

Refugees, chiefly, constituted the clean up gangs. None of the severely undernourished or physically unfit was required to work, but to the able-bodied the injunction of St. Paul, "if any would not work, neither should he eat," was applied. The handling of these refugees raised many interesting problems. In Kazan, for example, the officials of the Tartar Republic, with whom the most cordial relations were always maintained, came to the A.R.A. with the information that there was an unprecedented increase in crime and that in the majority of cases those caught were first offenders. The crime wave they attributed to the famine, but they were in doubt as to the best way of combatting it. At the suggestion of one of the A.R.A., the authorities organized a force of about twelve hundred able-bodied refugees, whom they divided into two groups, one to serve as sanitary police during the day, and the other as special force of night watchmen. The city was divided into zones, and squads under appointed leaders were responsible for the sanitary conditions of delimited zones, or other squads for the maintenance of order and the prevention of crime. The plan worked out most successfully. The city was cleaned; crime diminished; and many refugees who otherwise would have been engaged in no more profitable occupation than sitting in the sun were usefully employed.

Out in the Ufa-Urals district, Colonel Bell persuaded the officials of the gubernias and republics with whom he had to deal, to allow him to organize city and village improvement committees. He placed energetic and capable Russians in charge and then started them off on a general campaign of doing things which the communities needed to have done. In the city of Zlatoust, the people had been talking for seventy years of the need of a drainage canal, which would save the city from a great loss of property, and even of life, during the

spring floods. For seventy years they had not progressed beyond recognition of the desirability of the canal, but, in the midst of the greatest famine that Zlatoust had ever known, there came the A.R.A. improvement committee, which set energetically to work and within a short time had constructed a canal eight hundred meters long. There were similar activities in Cheliabinsk, Ekaterinburg, Koustanaï and Sterlitamak. During the summer of 1922, these committees built 270 badly needed new bridges, and repaired 160 old ones. They constructed ninety-four new water cisterns for towns and villages, and repaired and restored to use a number of schools,<sup>4</sup> all of which were accomplished by employing labor for food.

Directly south of the Urals was the A.R.A. Orenburg district. The city of Orenburg, the center of A.R.A. activities in this region, is situated on the Ural river, which each spring overflows and usually carries away some three feet of land along its banks, within the city limits. Coleman, the A.R.A. Supervisor, marshalled the refugees from the Kirghiz Republic and revetted the banks of the Ural at the dangerous places. His force of refugees, in addition, planted over sixty thousand trees and repaired three of the principal streets, bringing the stones for this purpose from a distance of three versts outside the city.<sup>5</sup>

The city of Orsk, also in this district, but farther east had, according to Buckley who had charge of the feeding there, never in its history been cleaned. The plan used here involved not only the use of refugee labor, but the exertion of pressure on the occupants of houses, practically all of whom were receiving corn rations from the A.R.A. A gang of three hundred workers proceeded to clean the streets and the yards and premises of all unoccupied buildings, while each family was required to clean its own yard to the satisfaction of the A.R.A. inspector, under pain of receiving no further issues of corn. Though these activities were regarded with disgust by some of the inhabitants, and with little interest by the authorities,

<sup>4</sup>For further account of the Ufa-Urals operations see W. L. Bell, "On the Edge of Siberia," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXIII, 7-15.

<sup>5</sup>W. H. A. Coleman, "The A.R.A. in Orenburg"; *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXIV, 9-22.

as soon as the job had been satisfactorily accomplished, the officials expressed their pleasure and coöperated in having the heaps of refuse removed.

### NEW CONDITIONS

In the spring and summer months, when vegetables began to appear and the growth of the grain made it possible to estimate the prospects of the autumn harvest, the reports from A.R.A. men in the field became decidedly optimistic. For example from Gaskill at Saratov (May 12) came the statement: "Prospect for the crop is now unusually favorable . . . general opinion concerning the ability of the district to support itself seems very optimistic." Kazan, early in June, wrote that "Price of bread is at present seven times cheaper in relation to wages paid than two months ago." The officials of the Pomgol (the Government Relief Committee), on the strength of reports from their representatives, reached the same conclusion as the A.R.A., that the worst was over. In a report made public in May, Vinokurov, the Deputy Chairman of the Central Pomgol, declared that "the Volga territory is now a convalescent on the point of recovery and favorable weather affords the hope of a good crop."<sup>6</sup>

These reports raised two questions for the A.R.A. First, should it continue its work in Russia after the harvest? And second, in case it were continued, how should it be modified? During the many years of its activities, the A.R.A. had maintained the policy that the emergency mass relief which it delivered should be discontinued as soon as the country was in a position to produce sufficient foodstuffs for its population, or was in such an economic situation that it could supply whatever deficit there might be through the exchange of its industrial products for food. The first thing to determine, therefore, in the case of Russia, was whether the harvest of 1922 would yield a sufficient supply for food to carry the whole population through the following year.

<sup>6</sup> In an article in *Izvestia*, May 17, 1922, Vinokurov surveyed the extent of famine and the relief measures and concluded that: "This shows a clear break of the famine; its back is broken."



Hutchinson prepared a questionnaire which went out to every A.R.A. district with instructions that the information called for should be secured from local official sources and checked by personal investigations by American inspectors and by the reports of the Russian members of the A.R.A. staffs. On the basis of the data provided by these questionnaires, supplemented by official reports in the hands of the Soviet Central Statistical Bureau, Hutchinson made maximum and minimum estimates, based on the most optimistic and the most pessimistic figures. He deduced that the crop of 1922 would exceed that of 1921 by 333 million poods (minimum) or 480 million poods (maximum). The particular significance of this probable increase over the preceding year lay in the fact that it amounted to three or four times as much food as had been imported into the country for famine relief by all agencies, both foreign and Russian.<sup>7</sup> Hutchinson also made separate estimates of the probable production and consumption, with the resultant surplus or deficit, in the famine regions of the R.S.F.S.R. and the Ukraine. With regard to the former, which contained a population of approximately 45 millions (*i.e.*, about 65 per cent of the total population of the R.S.F.R.S.) the most optimistic figures showed a probable surplus of 81,127,000 poods, while the most pessimistic figures showed a deficit of 117,910,000 poods. These figures appeared to indicate that, with fair weather, this part of Russia would be barely able to produce enough to supply its own requirements. As for the Ukraine, the best figures showed a probable surplus of 393,840,000, while the worst figures showed a surplus also of 50,102,000. The official estimates of the Soviet Government, based on the reports of crop conditions on June 1, were decidedly optimistic, for they showed a surplus above consumption for all of Russia of 217 million poods.

In his report <sup>8</sup> at this time, Hutchinson showed that in the famine regions taken as a whole, the signs indicated an ability

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Hutchinson's estimate of the total food imported into Russia for relief purposes by the government and foreign relief organizations was 120,014,000 poods. The official estimate of Vinokurov, Deputy Chairman of the Soviet Central Relief Committee was only 115 million poods, while that of Levenbook, an official of the ARCOS Ltd. (Soviet foreign purchasing agents) was 121,751,000 poods.

<sup>8</sup> This report by Dr Hutchinson, dated June 14, 1922, is unpublished.

to take care of themselves, although there were areas within these regions where there would be a serious shortage and where as he put it "famine may be expected, unless either freedom of trade is reëstablished, or the governmental distributing machinery improves in efficiency." These afflicted regions were the more remote, to which, because of their inaccessibility, the supplies of food and seed had been late in arriving. The population of these districts was, however, relatively small, so that the general proposition of a favorable outlook was not affected by the reservations in respect to these particular localities.

Although the Soviet Government and the A.R.A., which were perhaps better able than most to know the true situation in Russia,<sup>9</sup> were in general in agreement, there were others claiming to speak authoritatively who disagreed. And some, as usual, maintained that the A.R.A. was deliberately misrepresenting the situation to injure other American relief organizations, or to destroy the Soviet Government.<sup>10</sup> There was no comment, however, from these sources on the fact that the officials of the Russian Government were even more optimistic than the A.R.A.

The proponents of the theory that the famine was not under control, based their arguments largely on statements by Dr. Nansen, who had been making a gallant fight before the Council of the League of Nations for an immediate inquiry into the general situation in Russia, and the effect of the famine on the economic reconstruction of Europe. The most extreme of Dr. Nansen's statements at this time had been drawn forth as a reply to a wireless message sent by the Soviet Government to the Russian Trade Delegation in London.<sup>11</sup> The message stated that "the worst time has passed and the fact that thirty millions poods of seed have been supplied makes the

<sup>9</sup> The A.R.A. had representatives in all the famine gubernias, as well as in many others where the Food Remittance stations had been established. Hutchinson had personally visited practically all famine sections, was in close touch with Soviet experts, and was undoubtedly in a better position to judge the situation than any other foreigner.

<sup>10</sup> The *Freeman* (N. Y.), June 14, 1922, "A Lesson in Sabotage," and July 12, 1922, "A Herring on the Trail." W. N. Ewer in *The Nation* (N. Y.), May 17, 1922, "They Ask: Is the Famine Really Bad?" was very pessimistic.

<sup>11</sup> *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, May 19, 1922.

future hopeful." Dr. Nansen declared that this statement was inaccurate and to be regretted, and he gave it as his opinion that there would be another famine the following year. A few weeks later a statement was attributed <sup>12</sup> to him which declared that "conditions in Russia are getting worse every day. Starvation is increasing. . . . We are quite helpless in the growing distress . . . Cannibalism is spreading to a terrific degree . . . Twenty-two million people are now directly endangered by starvation . . . Seven or eight million people might perhaps be saved by us next autumn. But the rest (*i.e.*, 14 or 15,000,000) inevitably face starvation . . . The truth is: Starvation is going to be worse next year, and even the year after the next will be a terrible one. Russia is sinking deeper and deeper. . . ."

Dr. Nansen and representatives of other relief activities in Russia made statements of this kind in good faith. But the information on which they were based was inadequate, for their contacts with the situation were relatively few, and their indirect sources of information appear not to have been reliable.

As for the A.R.A. at this time, the information concerning the crop prospects and the general situation in Russia was laid before a conference in Moscow which met on June 17, attended by Edgar Rickard, Director General of the A.R.A., James P. Goodrich, member of the Board of Trustees and special investigator, and Christian A. Herter, Assistant Director, who represented the American headquarters of the A.R.A.; Walter Lyman Brown, the Director for Europe, representing the London office; and Colonel Haskell, his principal assistants in Moscow, with the supervisors from the A.R.A. administrative districts in the famine regions.<sup>13</sup> The men from the famine districts agreed in the main to the estimates in Hutchinson's report. They felt, moreover, that except in certain remote regions the continuation of famine relief, or mass relief, such as the A.R.A. had been furnishing, would not be necessary the

<sup>12</sup> *The Nation* (N. Y.), June 28, 1922, quoting from a statement in the *Dagbladet* (Christiania). Also W. N. Ewer, *op. cit.*

<sup>13</sup> In addition to those named, the following attended this conference: R. H. Allen, H. Beeuwkes, W. L. Bell, G. L. Carden, W. H. A. Coleman, W. P. Davenport, H. H. Fisher, E. Fox, C. S. Gaskill, F. A. Golder, W. R. Grove, L. Hutchinson, J. A. Lehrs, J. J. Mangan, P. Mathews, M. F. Murphy, C. J. C. Quinn, D. Renshaw, C. Telford, I. W. Wahren, H. C. Walker.



following year. To questions as to the degree of coöperation given by Soviet officials, only two supervisors of the eastern famine districts said that they had received even fair coöperation. As for the Ukraine, Colonel Grove said that excellent coöperation had been received from the representative of the Central Ukrainian Government, and in the subdistrict of Nikolaiev, but in other subdistricts there had been either indifference or hostility.

At this Moscow meeting no decision was taken regarding the continuation of relief, since the actual results of the harvest were still problematic, and no such decision was made until a second conference, held in New York at the end of July. In the meantime Sir Benjamin Robertson, the Indian famine expert, who had been drafted to act as chairman of the British United Russian Famine Relief Committee which engaged in an All British appeal for funds, added further testimony on the situation, when he announced that his task as chairman of this committee had been completed, since the back of the famine in its districts had been broken, and the catastrophe had been reduced to manageable dimensions.<sup>14</sup> Sir Benjamin's conclusions, after investigation of evidence, were similar to those of the A.R.A., namely, that there would be famine in spots, but on the whole, there would be just enough to carry the peasants over into the next year. "In any case (said Sir Benjamin), it is now for the Soviet Government to prove its competence to assist the people under its rule. The Bolsheviks have been telling us officially at The Hague and in other places about the splendid harvest they are confidently expecting. They have also spoken about the excellence of their administrative arrangements. It is for them to demonstrate their efficiency in sweeping away the remains of last year's catastrophe."

The officials of the Soviet Government had, indeed, continued to reiterate to the world that the famine had been conquered and that Russia was getting on her feet, where she could take care of herself. This insistence on their capacity for self-support was, of course, a part of the diplomatic offensive at The Hague Conference, which had opened on June

<sup>14</sup> Interview in *The Daily Telegraph* (London), July 25, 1922.

15, and dragged on without any tangible results through June and July. In this conference, at which it was hoped that an arrangement covering the matter of Russian debts and relations with the Entente could be patched up, Litvinov, the principal Soviet representative, adopted the attitude that his government was not approaching the western powers as a suppliant, but as an equal. His country was willing to negotiate, but equally willing to get along as it had in the past, without official dealings with other countries. To back up their delegates at The Hague, the Russian press painted the harvest prospects in rather brilliant colors. *Pravda* declared:<sup>15</sup> "A sound harvest provides the basis for the Russian delegation at The Hague speaking clearly, decisively, and with a firm tongue . . . this year is a grain year and . . . the famine is ending and will not be repeated." Litvinov issued a similar statement, to the distress and annoyance of the relief organizations that were trying to raise money in Europe, and the Dutch Nansen Committee called upon Litvinov: "To withdraw your deceiving assertion about famine conditions, or publicly assume responsibility for the discontinuance of relief from the Netherlands." Litvinov did not withdraw his statement, but was able to satisfy the Committee by saying that the anticipated good crop could not be expected to remove the effects of the famine and that it was desirable to have relief continued during the following year.

To add further confusion in the public mind, in July as The Hague Conference drew to a close, an international relief conference was called in Berlin, under the auspices of the relief agencies representing the left wing of the labor movement and closely affiliated with the Communist political activities. Some of the bourgeois relief organizations also had delegates at the conference, but in the main it was a celebration of proletarian achievement. The purpose of the conference was to secure the support of the workers of the world in a new relief campaign, which would emphasize reconstruction in distinction to famine relief. In the course of this conference Eiduk, no longer representative plenipotentiary with the A.R.A., but one of the principal Russian delegates, stated to a correspondent:

<sup>15</sup> July 8th, 1922.

"No Russian will die of hunger this winter. The present harvest will insure enough grain for every adult."<sup>16</sup> But ignoring this and other statements by high Russian authorities, the relief organizations hostile to the A.R.A. utilized the occasion for a continuation of their attacks, based now on the A.R.A.'s reports on Russian conditions. A circular memorandum by the secretary of a Communist relief organization informed the delegates: "Relief organizations of a non-proletarian nature, like the A.R.A., et cetera, which have always regarded famine relief as a phase of class struggle, now recognize the failure of their political aims, and accordingly seek to attain their political goal by other means; if not through famine relief, then by the curtailment of that relief."<sup>17</sup>

Of much more importance to the members of the A.R.A. than criticism of this kind was a generous tribute from the greatest of living Russian writers, whose appeal in July, 1921, was the preliminary to the successful relief negotiations. Maxim Gorky, now an exile from Russia, wrote Hoover, July 30, 1922:

"In all the history of human suffering I know of nothing more trying to the souls of men than the events through which the Russian people are passing, and in the history of practical humanitarianism I know of no accomplishment which in terms of magnitude and generosity can be compared to the relief that you have actually accomplished . . .

"The generosity of the American people resuscitates the dream of fraternity among people at a time when humanity greatly needs charity and compassion."<sup>18</sup>

### THE TENTATIVE PROGRAM

All this controversy as to true conditions in Russia, which in Europe was carried on largely between the representatives of the Soviet Government and Dr. Nansen, was echoed intermittently in America. Meanwhile the A.R.A. had formulated a tentative policy at a conference of its officers in New York

<sup>16</sup> *New York Herald*, July 21, 1922.

<sup>17</sup> *New York Evening Post*, July 13, 1922.

<sup>18</sup> Full text of this letter is given in A.R.A. Bulletin, Ser. 2, XXVIII, 6.



on July 30.<sup>19</sup> The conclusion arrived at was that after the harvest, the relief operations would be greatly curtailed, but that from one to two million children, waifs of war and famine, would be supported for an indefinite period until it was more certainly known whether the harvest was as favorable as anticipated, and whether the distribution machinery of the Soviet Government would be able to utilize the increased resources at its disposal with enough efficiency to prevent a recurrence of famine conditions in the cities and less fortunate areas. The specific reference to cities in distinction to villages was the result of economic changes of considerable significance.

Early in the summer it was clear that the New Economic Policy, in conjunction with the Soviet industrial policy and the revival of agricultural production, was bringing changes that would have to be considered in shaping relief policy. The increase in the production of the peasants did not mean, of course, that they had reached solid ground. They unquestionably had more to eat, but during the years of violence they had lost practically everything essential to their existence, clothing, utensils, machinery, and domestic animals. Hence, as soon as they had grain and were allowed to dispose of it, they rushed to exchange it for the industrial products they had needed so long. Immediately, there came a precipitous reversal in the price relationship of food and manufactured goods. For example, in a typical peasant community an arshin of calico was worth seven poods of rye in 1913. In January, 1922, when the country was in the grip of famine, food was so valuable that the arshin of calico would buy only two poods of rye. During the summer of 1922, the price of food began to fall, until in October it was even below that of 1913, and the arshin of calico would buy 8.9 poods of rye. Similarly a pood of iron was worth ten poods of rye in 1913, only five in January, 1922, and thirty-six in the following October.

This represented the beginning of a condition which gave the

<sup>19</sup> Those attending this conference were, Herbert Hoover, Chairman; Julius H. Barnes, Vice-Chairman; Edgar Rickard, Director General; Wm. B. Poland, Technical Adviser; (Members of the Executive Committee) and the following: George Barr Baker, Director States Organization; Walter Lyman Brown, Director in Europe; A. T. Dailey, Perrin C. Galpin, James P. Goodrich, Wm. N. Haskell, Director in Russia, C. A. Herter, F. C. Page, Lawrence Richey, R. H. Sawtelle, and Edwin P. Shattuck.

Russian economists a great deal of trouble during the succeeding years. The poverty of the peasants, combined with the low prices they received for what they produced, made it impossible for them to buy the products from the city industries which they needed most acutely. There was, therefore, no market for the goods turned out by the factories, which forced the government either to make up the deficit from the budget, or to close many plants and concentrate on a few that were better equipped. The struggle of the government to balance its budget made the latter policy the one most frequently adopted. This in turn, since it involved the closing of many factories and the reduction of staff of others, caused a sharp increase in the number of unemployed. The registered unemployed, which represented only a part of those who were actually without work, numbered 67,752 on February 1st, 1922, and 540,000 on December 1st of the same year.<sup>20</sup>

This great increase in unemployment caused a shift in the center of gravity of the relief problem. Where during the preceding year that center had been in the villages, it was now in the large towns and cities. N.E.P. had revived trading and small industry, but heavy industry, which normally supported the towns, collapsed completely when no longer upheld by subsidies. Another heavy burden, resting particularly on the cities, was the care of the displaced children, the orphans of the war, revolution, and famine. While all this was in no way a famine condition and did not affect estimates of food resources, in the program tentatively laid down, the A.R.A. necessarily took into consideration all the changes that were taking place.

The orders that went from New York to Quinn (Acting Director in Russia in Haskell's absence) were to demobilize adult feeding by September 1; to demobilize child feeding, except in urban and necessitous areas; not to increase the pace of medical distribution (which would have been necessary had the A.R.A. withdrawn after the harvest); and to continue Food Remittances as before.

Upon his return to Russia from the conference with Hoover

<sup>20</sup> *Izvestia*, June 20, 1923. *Narodnoie Khoziaistvo Rossii*, 1922-1923, p. 188, Moscow, 1925.

and the directors of the A.R.A., Haskell wrote to the District Supervisors outlining the new policy which included the following points:

(1) Continuation through the winter with a large medical program and a reduced program of about 1,000,000 rations a day for children and sick. (2) Immediate reduction of personnel to reduce overhead expenses to the Russian Government and to the A.R.A. (3) Reduction of open kitchen feeding and inauguration of work in native institutions, as far as possible, for the double purpose of reducing expenses and of building up these institutions so that they would be strong enough to carry on when the A.R.A. withdrew. (4) The necessity of releasing members of the A.R.A. because of the reduced program.<sup>21</sup>

The childfeeding allocations under the new program provided for 580,000 children and sick, distributed among the districts of Kazan, Simbirsk, Samara, Saratov, Tzaritzin, Ufa, Moscow, Petrograd, Minsk, and the Crimea, and 225,000 in the Ukrainian districts of Odessa, Zaporosh, Nikolaiev, and Ekaterinoslav, with an additional 25,000 for institutional feeding in Kiev and Kharkov. It was understood that this was a tentative allocation, subject to revision, if the harvest proved greater or less than expected.

Among the minor changes in the readjustment to the new program were the closing of the Orenburg District, the change of the Ukraine from a single administrative district into six districts, as originally constituted, and the combination of the Tzaritzin District with the Food Remittance station at Rostov, forming one large district, covering what is usually described in Russia as "the Southeast," with headquarters at Rostov. The closing of the Orenburg District was a result of the improvement in conditions there and an unwillingness on the part of the representative of the Central Government in that district to give the necessary coöperation to the work. The operations around Orenburg had been carried on under the most unfavorable conditions, with constant friction with the local officials, and constant appeals to Moscow. Nothing seemed to relieve

<sup>21</sup> Circular Letter No. 115 to District Supervisors, September 12, 1922.



the friction, and as the food conditions had improved, discontinuance of this district was agreeable to both the A.R.A. and the Central Soviet Government.

Other changes included the transfer of the A.R.A. European Headquarters to New York in November, when Walter Lyman Brown, the European Director, became established in the New York office. Practically all the other European offices of the A.R.A. were either closed, or closing, at this time. Riga, however, as a port of entry for Russian supplies, was placed under the Russian Unit.

Because of the decision of the A.R.A. to continue in Russia for another year, and for other reasons, the original plan of making the Ukraine an autonomous relief district with a separate relief operation, directed by the J.D.C.,<sup>22</sup> was not carried out.

A plan for this separation, worked out in Moscow in June by the representatives of the A.R.A. and the J.D.C., was abandoned on instructions from the headquarters of the J.D.C. in New York. The arrangement adopted was that the general feeding and medical relief should continue as a part of the A.R.A. Russian operation. The activities in reconstruction, in which the J.D.C. was interested, were to be carried on separately, quite independent of the A.R.A., in accordance with a separate understanding between the J.D.C. and the Soviet Government.<sup>23</sup> With the reduction of the work in the Ukraine to the limitations of the after famine program, the work which Colonel Grove had undertaken and had vigorously and successfully put through, was completed and he returned to America.

<sup>22</sup> Chapter XI.

<sup>23</sup> A.R.A.—J.D.C. Agreement, see Appendix A. Doc. XIII.

## CHAPTER XIV

### EXPORT VS. RELIEF

WHEN it came time to pass from the tentative program laid down in August to a more definite program for the winter and spring of 1922-23 the A.R.A. ran into complexities and difficulties. These were not, as was the case the previous year, attributable to official suspicion and incompetence or administrative disorganization, but to the economic policies of the Soviet Government. Matters came to a head first when the Moscow authorities announced their intention of exporting food and at the same time asked foreign relief organizations to provide food for four million hungry Russians. These two policies were not easily reconciled and made the raising of relief funds almost impossible. If there was food enough in Russia to warrant export, there would appear to be no justification for the import of food from abroad for relief. On the other hand, if four million people in Russia were likely to starve unless food was imported, there could be no justification for export. This was the dilemma which faced the A.R.A. and other foreign relief organizations in the autumn of 1922.

The efforts of the Russian officials and others to escape the horns of this dilemma caused a great deal of confusion both in the public mind and among those who were trying to solve the relief problem. The situation would have been greatly clarified if the Soviet Government had made a frank statement of the relation of the relief problem to the general economic situation which existed as a result of the attempt under the N.E.P. to maintain "state capitalism" without capital. But it continued to have a famine on the one hand and a food export on the other. Only gradually, and after much argument, did the true situation emerge. Here we shall follow developments as they appeared to the A.R.A. at the time.

## SOVIET RELIEF POLICY: RECONSTRUCTION; NOT FAMINE

On September 12, 1922, the All Russian Central Executive Committee issued a decree <sup>1</sup> abolishing the Pomgol (the official famine relief committee) and creating in its place the Posledgol, which, translated, means the Committee for the Struggle Against the Consequences of the Famine. The decree declared that the "impact of the famine had disappeared but had left in its wake a terrible wreckage," and the objective of the new committee, and therefore of the Government, was primarily reconstruction, as distinct from relief of hunger. As explained in *Izvestia* (September 30), the purpose was to "help to reestablish the destroyed farms and to relieve the poor population and especially the invalids of the war, labor, and famine, and the helpless children from the famine regions." Somewhat grandiose plans for the rehabilitation of the country appeared in *Izvestia*, and cynical Russians remarked that "the new Posledgol would probably feed its own hopes, but not the population." Many held this opinion, and a clamor of protests greeted the announcement of the discontinuance of the famine relief organization. The uproar was so loud that Kalenin had to issue two statements, reassuring the people of the provinces that they had not been abandoned by this action of the government.

The violence of the protests was due to three factors: First, the change in policy meant the discontinuance of the special dispensations given to afflicted sections. Second, it meant that there would be no likelihood of receiving free help from foreign organizations, if the government itself did not go through even the motions of relief. And third, no region was willing to admit that its crops had been favorable and that it was able to take care of itself, since every region desired above all things to avoid paying the tax which the center imposed.

The panicky flood of protests grew in volume as the days passed and as the tax collectors went through the villages making their assessments. Wails, supplications, and protests assailed not only the officials, but the A.R.A. as well. Typical was the complaint brought to the A.R.A. from the uyezd of

<sup>1</sup> *Izvestia*, September 14, 1922.



Karsoon in Simbirsk, which said that although there had been a good crop in 1919, the tax assessed had been only 470,000 poods, of which only 350,000 were actually collected; yet in 1922, the year after the famine, with only a moderate harvest, the tax assessed was 698,000 poods. Similar tales were told in other regions, and by sheer force of repetition they began to shake the optimism that had been held a few weeks earlier by practically all the field representatives of the A.R.A. For if the tax was higher than the districts could stand, and the government cut down its own relief, famine conditions would surely reappear, even though the harvest was good.

While the rumblings of apprehension and indignation grew in the villages, the tone of the official utterances from the Kremlin continued buoyant. The Central Statistical Bureau and the Food Commissariat in July had confirmed the optimism of May and June, and there were debates not only on the extent of the surplus above the needs of the country, but on the best way to dispose of it. Briuchanov, Commissar of Food, said in *Izvestia* (July 21), "The Volga region will be able to subsist on its own bread." He said, further, that the bread tax would cover the needs of the army and the workers, and part of it could be used for the restoration of peasant farms. He then asked the question, "Will Russia export bread this year?" and said that the surplus would amount to from 150 to 200 million poods, which he thought might be exported. The interview concluded with the statement: "The harvest is good, the famine has passed, let it never come again." A month later (August 30), Trotzky told *Izvestia* that the harvest would enable the government not only to provide for the towns and industries, but to resume export on a modest scale.

This talk of export by high officials in Moscow was echoed, with exaggerated emphasis, by the agents of the Soviet Government abroad, so that the impression got about through the newspapers that Russian agriculture had so far recovered that the country was again to become a factor in the world grain market. And this was, apparently, exactly the impression that a certain group of the Moscow Government desired to give. On the other hand, those foreign relief organizations working in Russia, that were dependent on month to month

collection of funds for their work, found that all this talk of exports would soon reduce their income to nothing. It was quite impossible to persuade people to contribute to famine relief when they read in their newspapers that the Russians had such a surplus that they were going to export it. Gorvin, the head of the Nansen Mission, brought this to the attention of Kamenev, and asked for an authoritative statement as to the export of grain and the needs of the country in respect to the importation of foreign relief. Kamenev replied, October 4, that though there had been a good crop, the rehabilitation of Russian agriculture would be impossible without foreign help, and he recommended this to the Nansen Mission, which had always been interested in reconstruction work, as well as famine relief.

As for export, Kamenev wrote: "Of course, owing to the extensive territory of the Russian Republic, there may be single instances of exportation of cereals, but I can assure you that this is a question of such inconsiderable quantities and in all events of such cereals which, through transport or other reasons, cannot be utilized in the districts in need of bread." This was on October 4, but on September 26, the Soviet Bureau in Berlin had announced that Russia had 2,750,000 tons of grain for export.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, reports from A.R.A. representatives proved that extensive preparations for export were afoot. On September 23, Hodgson, the A.R.A. Supervisor at Rostov, reported that the grain elevators at Novorossisk were then filled with barley and wheat for export. September 28, Franklin, the port officer at Petrograd, wrote that the export elevator of the Nicholas railway was being filled with rye from the Volga for export, though there was some local agitation for keeping this rye in Petrograd. Lange, October 9, wired from Odessa that the local Gubprodkom was preparing to ship from three to four million poods from Odessa.

These reports seemed to mean more than Kamenev's "inconsiderable quantities." The Soviet agents in Berlin might be talking extraordinary nonsense about the extent of the exports, but at the same time it was very clear that widespread

<sup>2</sup> Cable dispatch to *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, September 25, 1922. Russia exported about 10,800,000 tons in 1913. *Russian Almanac*, 1919, p. 72.

preparations for export were in progress. Furthermore, the explanation suggested by Kamenev, that the grain exported was only that which for reasons of transportation could not be distributed to the needy districts, would not hold when it was observed that Volga rye was being shipped out of Petrograd, Ukrainian wheat and barley from Odessa, and Kuban wheat and barley from Novorossisk, all of these ports having been used by the A.R.A. to bring in supplies to the very sections from which the export was being made.

SOVIET PROGRAM FOR THE A.R.A.: FAMINE RELIEF FOR  
3,000,000

The turn which affairs were taking made it necessary for the A.R.A. to ask the Soviet Government to throw more light on its food needs, its resources, and its intentions in respect to relief. Haskell had cabled that on the basis of his latest reports from the districts, the tentative childfeeding program of one million should be expanded and that there would be about a million adults who would have to be fed by some one for a period of five months. The adults raised a new issue. The available A.R.A. funds had been subscribed and earmarked for children and sick. If adults were added to the program, new funds must be raised. But in view of the widely advertised exports, could funds for this purpose be secured and was the A.R.A. justified in asking the American people to provide them? <sup>3</sup> Hoover, therefore, cabled Haskell on September 26 that:

"Before we undertake the burden of Russian relief beyond our planned child program, we must know more of Soviet intentions. Foodstuffs must be put into motion at once for the one million adults who begin starving on January 1st, therefore we must know: First, what provision Soviet is making for domestic food supply to these people. Second, as the famine church collections and crown jewels have been widely adver-

<sup>3</sup> The question of child and hospital feeding was not involved, since for this purpose special foods, milk, fats, rice, cocoa, et cetera, were needed and these, of course, were not included on the list of proposed Russian exports. But wheat and rye were on this list, and these products were wholly suitable for adult relief.



tised, what provision is being made to realize on these collections and to apply them to prevent starvation. It will scarcely be possible for Russia to make a successful appeal for public charity abroad until evidence is given of complete exhaustion of the above resources. Therefore the whole problem must be thrashed out with Soviet authorities:

“(a) Do they need imported supplies?

(b) Are their resources exhausted?

(c) If they still have these treasures what are they going to do with them in provision for their people?

“We, of course, wish to coöperate in every way practicable.”

In line with this cable, Haskell wrote Kamenev (October 9) reiterating his wish to coöperate with the government in meeting the problem of a return of famine conditions in some sections, and summarizing his latest estimate of the situation. His letter continued:

“If I am correct in my conclusions, I feel that I should recommend to Mr. Hoover to seek the finance and set in motion such food supplies as may be necessary beyond those obtainable by the Soviet Government to meet this oncoming famine situation.

“However, it will be apparent to you that, before making any recommendations, I must know more of the Soviet Government's food resources and intentions, for the reason that it will be very difficult to obtain funds except to cover so much of the need as is clearly beyond the resources of the Soviet Government.

“No successful appeal on behalf of Russia could possibly be made for public charity abroad unless evidence is given by the Soviet Government:

- (1) That the Soviet Government is making every provision, within its power, for the domestic food supplies for the starving and that, in addition, it is made clear that a real need will exist for imported supplies beyond the domestic availabilities.
- (2) That the Soviet Government announces how much of the necessary imported foodstuffs they will be able to purchase with their own resources now available.

- (3) That the Soviet Government will state the net difference between the requirements for import and what they will be able to purchase abroad.

"You are well aware, Mr. Kamenev, of the wide publicity given abroad concerning the sufficiency of the 1922 harvest to meet all of Russia's food requirements. You are also cognizant of the fact that the famine church collections and crown jewels have been widely advertised and that no official and comprehensive statement has been published as to what provision is being made, if any, to realize on these collections and to apply them to prevent starvation.

"I think you will agree with me that, if it is the desire of the Russian Government to obtain American assistance beyond our present program, it would clear the atmosphere and make it easier for the friends of Russia to obtain the necessary finances if your Government would publish a frank statement concerning the disposition that has been, or will be made, of the assets referred to above, and show that a need exists for imported foodstuffs beyond the remaining available resources of the Soviet Government."

The reply to this letter was anticipated by a dispatch (dated October 14) from Walter Duranty to the *New York Times* of October 16, which said that it was generally agreed among Russians and Americans that there would be five million starving from December, with two or three million more from March to the next harvest. The wide variation between Duranty's figures and those previously received from Haskell caused some confusion in the A.R.A. headquarters. Haskell, however, explained that Duranty was referring rather to the number of people affected, while Haskell's figures referred to the absolute minimum of rations needed. Haskell again restated his position, which was that 2,500,000 adult rations (daily) would meet the situation. (The tentative A.R.A. programs provided for 1,000,000 children's rations, with room for considerable expansion.)

The official reply from the Soviet Government came a few days later (October 20), when Haskell met Kamenev and officials representing the Central Statistical Bureau, the Commissariats of Agriculture, Food Supply, Health, and the State

Planning Committee. The position described by the government was briefly this: The total crop was 2,827,000,000 poods. The surplus in the hands of the peasants, which was unavailable to the government except by purchase, was about 200,000,000 poods. The food tax estimated at 340,000,000 poods was expected to yield only about 280,000,000 poods, due to exemptions, reductions, losses, and other causes. The government relief program had set aside 30,000,000 poods for free seed distribution, and 6,000,000 for feeding; the appropriations for relief from the Central Government were not yet known.<sup>4</sup> As regards the number in need of help, the Government estimated that by November 1 there would be 4,300,000 people, who, though not starving, would need assistance, and that by January 1, over eight million would require help.<sup>5</sup> These figures were said to be the absolute minimum. The increased resources available would enable the government to care for four million, or one million more than they had supported the previous year. Other foreign organizations were thought to be able to support one million, leaving the remaining three million for the A.R.A. Kamenev declared that there were four million people beyond all practical resources of the government. He declared, further, that the government did not plan to purchase foodstuffs abroad, but would do so if necessary. The result of the seizure of church treasures, he said, was much below expectation,<sup>6</sup> but all funds realized from this were used exclusively for famine. The crown jewels were of such nature that the government could not realize any considerable sum on them. Medical needs were based on 430,000 beds, for which the government could provide fifty per cent of requirements, and requested the A.R.A. to provide the remainder. The re-

<sup>4</sup> As a matter of fact the Commissariat of Finance cut relief appropriations to the bone with serious results to the whole operation. This phase of the situation is discussed in the following chapter.

<sup>5</sup> Those suffering from severe food shortage, and undernourishment, if they had some food, were not classed as starving.

<sup>6</sup> The exaggeration concerning extent of church treasures seized was the fault of the government which, according to the official report, "Pomgol Propaganda Campaign," made an overestimate of treasures in order to conquer the opposition of the clergy, with the result that the impression was gained that "enough funds would be collected to supply the whole republic with grain for two years." Tsentralnaia Komissia Pomoshchi Golodaiushchim, *Itogi Borby s Golodom*, 155.



placement needs of live stock were estimated at 500,000 horses, 500,000 cows, 1,500,000 sheep, and 100,000 hogs. These animals would be required for the famine regions only, in order to operate an area equal to that planted in 1921. In forwarding this statement to New York, Haskell added that he believed that the requirements, as stated by the government, were reasonable.

The question of the more extensive program that this communication raised was taken up immediately by the officers of the A.R.A. in New York. Indeed, ever since the receipt of Haskell's earlier cable, suggesting the likelihood that adult feeding would be necessary, Hoover and his associates had been considering an appeal as a means of securing the necessary resources for a wider relief activity during the coming winter. Among the factors that had to be considered was the difficulty of securing a large response to an appeal in which it was impossible to say that the Russian Government had no means with which to help its people, and that famine threatened again. The talk during the summer of bumper crops and the continued discussion of grain export made any such statement impossible. Furthermore, in contrast with the preceding winter, the situation could be honestly described only as "bad in spots." But a public appeal will not secure much money on any such grounds. This had, of course, been long recognized by some of the collecting agencies, especially in Europe, who reiterated almost hysterically that the famine this year would be much worse than last. Since a general public appeal was unlikely to succeed, the Directors of the A.R.A. had decided that a letter, signed by Hoover, should be sent to former contributors to the A.R.A.; that this letter should state frankly and without exaggeration the situation as it appeared, and ask those to whom it was addressed to contribute as generously as they could to enable the A.R.A. to extend its work. Such a letter was drafted and the mechanical preparations for printing and mailing were completed, while the New York officers awaited the outcome of Haskell's negotiations with Kamenev.

Unfortunately the details of Kamenev's summary, when it came, were not wholly convincing to the A.R.A., nor did they seem an effective basis for an appeal. In the first place, the

crop figure now officially stated was over 400,000,000 poods larger than the estimate which the Central Statistical Bureau had presented to the A.R.A. on July 7,<sup>7</sup> when there was general optimism. As to the number of persons to be fed, it was discovered that the Kamenev figure had been secured by the rough-and-ready method of taking five per cent of the total population of ten regions, which were officially recognized by the Soviet Government as needing assistance. It was possible that five per cent of the population of some of these regions might be in need of help, but it was also certain that in others less than five per cent would need help, while in certain smaller sections the percentage would unquestionably be considerably above five per cent. The figures, however, were taken as a reasonable guess, which was what they were. Nevertheless, no one in the A.R.A. believed that if only two million people were fed on January 1 (when 8,500,000 would be starving according to Kamenev), six million and a half would be certain to die. Long experience with the statistics of starvation had demonstrated that figures were useful chiefly as a means of indicating the relative improvement or worsening of conditions, and the experiences of the previous year had shown how quickly a relatively small, but regular, delivery of food could stabilize conditions.

Moreover, the grain export question was still open. Lander, in a letter (of 24 October, 1922) to Haskell, said:

"It is desirable to export abroad not more than ten million poods and then only in case it proves impossible to ship to the famine and needy districts owing to transport difficulties."

This statement was somewhat amplified by Kamenev to the press, where it was announced that this amount of food had already been concentrated in the south for export.

In short, the situation was this: The Soviet Government asked the A.R.A. to feed not one million, but three, presenting a far worse picture of conditions than it had during the summer. At the same time, some branches of the government continued to talk of food surplus; Kamenev's own figures gave a larger crop estimate than mentioned before; preparations for export

<sup>7</sup> The gross crop for 1921-1922 was 1,348,765,000 poods.

went ahead; and official statements as to both exports and liquid assets were conflicting.

#### THE A.R.A. PROPOSAL: NO EXPORT, AND AN AMERICAN APPEAL

The officers of the A.R.A. were dissatisfied with this situation on both ethical and practical grounds, and Hoover sent (October 25, 1922) the following proposal to Haskell for transmission to Kamenev:

"After meeting of Trustees and staff we have following suggestion to make reference your eighteen and press dispatch regarding Russian crops and contemplated export of grain:

"Interviews by Soviet officials in press indicate intention to export food from Black Sea ports, the statement being that this food will be sold in Mediterranean, and other food bought in Northern Europe for import through Baltic, the whole because of inability transport by rail from South to North Russia.

"(1) Since famine areas lie southern Ukraine and Volga, we are unable to reconcile export of food from Black Sea ports, as foodstuffs to supply these areas would have to be imported through Black Sea ports and these proposals amount to importing food parallel with exporting from same ports. The export sale of food from Russia from any quarter while threatened by famine and starvation would at once destroy all outside sentiment for relief.

"(2) Possession of crown jewels, church treasures, and other liquid assets have been widely advertised by Soviet authorities throughout the world and to solicit public charity without the full use of these assets to feed starving people would create a hopeless reaction.

"(3) The A.R.A. is solely a charitable organization dependent upon public good will and generosity. It is prepared to carry out its original children's program in any event, but before it could hope for successful strengthening of its resources it would be necessary to have pledges that

(a) No foodstuffs would be exported from Russia under any circumstances until next harvest.



(b) Liquid assets such as mentioned above would be pledged to some European bank or agency for as much loan as could be obtained, the proceeds of which should be devoted to the import of foodstuffs for the famine sufferers. Otherwise the sincerity of Soviet authorities in relief of their suffering fellow countrymen will be open to constant challenge from all charitably disposed persons who will naturally insist that the first obligation of a government is to prevent starvation of its people and only when every resource of the government has been exhausted can there be rightful or successful call for their charity.

"(4) If these things were agreed to the A.R.A. would make an effort to increase its program, but naturally as much increased resources are dependent upon public charity, it is utterly impossible to undertake any guarantee as to positive amounts." <sup>8</sup>

A few days after transmitting this proposal, Haskell had two meetings with Kamenev (November 6 and 8), and received from him the government's reply which set forth the following points:

(1) The government expected to realize from ten to fifteen million dollars and perhaps more on grain exports from South Russia.<sup>9</sup> The grain exported came from the food tax; from government purchases from peasants by the State bank; from the food acquired from the peasants through the coöperatives, which was to be sold on a commission basis; and from the excess over the feeding needs and local sales of industrial

<sup>8</sup> In a separate cable the observation was made to Haskell that, assuming that the food imports from all sources to Russia the preceding year were sixty million poods and that an additional sixty million would have made the situation in respect to food supply relatively easy, the total available supplies for that year would have been only about 1,700,000,000. This year, according to Kamenev, the available food from local production, without any import, was over 2,800,000,000. In the light of these figures it was difficult to understand how the number of famine sufferers could be approximately half those of the preceding year. The message concluded: "Either Soviet estimates are wrong, or the situation is fundamentally much better than they represent. Such statements naturally arouse the suspicion that they wish to secure charitable imports, in order to realize an export business."

<sup>9</sup> After the first meeting Kamenev informed Haskell by letter (November 6, 1922), that the total value of bread exports might reach the sum of fifty million dollars.

organizations such as the Donetz coal industries, where such grain constituted payment in kind to the industrial organizations by the government. The export of this grain was necessary for the purchase of essential machinery to operate the mines.

(2) The government maintained that there was no possible source other than grain export for obtaining the necessary credits for the purchase of agricultural implements, cattle, foodstuffs, materials for the rehabilitation of the peasantry, and the urgent requirements of machinery for maintaining indispensable industries.

(3) The government expressed willingness to pledge abroad all liquid assets including church treasures and crown jewels as collateral for a loan, but doubted the possibility of making such a loan, since no government except Germany had recognized Russia, and Germany was not in a position to advance money. This proposal, moreover, was made on the condition that a guarantee be given that the crown jewels would not be attached by foreign claimants against Russia.<sup>10</sup> If such a loan could be arranged, the government would agree to use everything realized from church treasures, and as much as might be necessary of the remainder, for domestic or foreign purchase of foodstuffs for famine sufferers. In any event, up to two-thirds of the total loan, if necessary. The remaining one-third would be used for indispensable purchases, such as cotton for the textile industries, which if not soon forthcoming would mean the closing of practically all textile factories in Russia, with consequent unemployment and increase in the number of destitute requiring food.

(4) Providing that such a loan from ten to twelve million dollars could be effected, the government was ready to prohibit all export of cereals from Russia until the next harvest.

(5) If the loan were obtained, the government claimed it could buy the surplus grain from the peasants which otherwise would be exported through the coöperatives and private traders.

(6) The government expressed its gratitude to the A.R.A. for its willingness to undertake an increase of its program under the stated conditions, but pointed out that without

<sup>10</sup> This condition removed this proposal from the realm of possibility, for to secure such a guarantee from all the governments and individuals with claims against Russia would have involved vast international complications far beyond the powers of a private organization like the A.R.A.

knowledge of the extent of this program, the Soviet Government could not agree in advance to the proposition of withholding exports unless sufficient credits were obtained from abroad by such a loan as had been described.

This statement revealed for the first time the fundamental reason for the Soviet Government's paradoxical policy of endeavoring to sell part of its food supply in foreign markets, while asking the world to contribute food to replace what had been exported. The government needed cash or foreign credit for its industries. To get this cash or credit the Soviet officials said, in effect: "Either we will export our grain and leave 4,000,000 of our people dependent on foreign charity, or the A.R.A., or some one else must arrange a foreign loan of ten or twelve millions which up to now we have been unable to secure by direct negotiations." This posed a political question obviously beyond the powers of the A.R.A. or apparently of any one else, as had been decisively demonstrated by the barren results of the Russian discussions at the Genoa and The Hague conferences. Hoover, therefore, in his reply (November 18) returned to the issue with which the A.R.A. was concerned: the relation of export to relief:

"(1) The original proposition was the statement from the Soviet Government confirmed by the A.R.A., that some eight million Russian people, including three million children, were in immediate jeopardy of starvation, together with definite request from the Soviet for our charitable help.

"(2) It is obvious that the volume of intended exports of grain now disclosed by their statement would maintain the whole adult population in the famine areas, leaving the problem solely one of children.

"(3) The A.R.A. cannot enter into argument as to the stated reason of the legal inability of the Soviet Government to sell or borrow upon its liquid assets in order to revolve its food-stuffs internally or to import, further than to mention that Soviet Government has continuously sold confiscated property in England and continental countries for the last two years.

"(4) Of major importance, however, is the fact that the A.R.A. being a charitable organization devoted to saving human life from starvation must protest against the inhu-



manity of a government policy of exporting food from starving people in order that through such exports it may secure machinery and raw materials for the economic improvement of the survivors. Any such action imposes the direct responsibility for the death of millions of people upon the government authorities.

"(5) We do not believe that the American people will respond to an appeal for charity to prevent starvation when available food is being hauled by rail across the very areas where millions of people will die and is exported through the very ports into which food must be imported for their salvation."

By this time the A.R.A.'s letter appeal was ready to be placed in the mails in New York and only awaited the final decision of the Soviet Government. But it now seemed that there was no hope of prevailing upon the Soviets to hold up their exports and use this grain, or even a part of it, for the starving. If the appeal was sent, therefore, it would necessarily have to contain some reference to this matter. Word was sent to Haskell that the appeal might be issued, regardless of the government's reply, in which case it would contain a supplementary statement to the effect that the Soviet authorities intended to export food, that they proposed to use some of their resources for the purchase of other materials than food, but that foreign relief was necessary.

But before deciding finally to commence or abandon the money raising campaign, the A.R.A. stated its willingness to waive the question of the use of the Soviet Government's liquid assets and to make an appeal, on the single condition that the export of grain be prohibited. This was not acceptable to the Soviet Government. The Directors finally decided late in November to abandon the appeal, after consultation with Haskell who had arrived in America. It was clear that an appeal made in the face of the widely discussed exports might bring in little money and most certainly would precipitate a political controversy which would hamper all relief activities and might, by a reaction in Russia, jeopardize the child relief work which the A.R.A. had in hand, and for which funds were available.

Soviet officials were, of course, fully aware that their determination to export grain would diminish the flow of aid from abroad, and perhaps stop it entirely. They must, therefore, have felt either that famine was not as serious as they pretended, or that the loss of life which would result from the falling off of foreign aid was less important than the considerations which influenced them to export. It will be worth while to examine first, the reasons for export, and afterwards the nature of the new famine.

### THE REASONS FOR THE EXPORT OF GRAIN

There was no further attempt in Soviet official circles to explain the export policy on the pretext of transportation difficulties. It was, on its face, an extremely poor argument to use with people familiar with the geography of Russia and aware of what was taking place there, but it was vigorously employed in America in explanation of the Soviet policy.<sup>11</sup>

The official explanation of the grain exports was presented to the All Russian Central Executive Committee at its December (1922) meeting, as follows:

The need of imported grain to prevent starvation in certain regions is not a valid argument against export, because neither the state nor the hungry peasants has the means to buy the surplus grain of the fortunate regions. Thus, unless grain is exported, no one will buy the existing surplus, which will be left to rot and will do no one any good. Moreover, there is enough grain in Russia to permit, easily, the export of one hundred million poods and the condition of the world market will render this profitable.

This explanation was frank, but had some extraordinary implications. A concrete example was to be found in the Ukraine. The gubernia of Podolia produced a considerable food surplus. The adjoining gubernia of Odessa had a

<sup>11</sup> A striking example of the argument's absurdity was offered by the *Odessa Izvestia* of December 12th and 14th. On the 12th it announced that in two uyezds of Odessa gubernia, there were already ninety thousand starving. Two days later, it announced that the Khlebprodukt (a government grain trading organization) would shortly begin the exportation of two million poods of grain, through the ports of Odessa and Nikolaiev, and one million poods through Novorossisk.

deficit, and many people were doomed to starve if food were not brought in. According to the scheme officially outlined for the good of Russia, the surplus food in Podolia should not be used to save the lives of the peasants in Odessa, a few miles away, but should be carried through the starving regions, placed on board a steamer at Odessa port and sold in Hamburg, in order to buy implements to be returned to the peasants of Podolia. Meantime, if the starving peasants of Odessa were to be fed, the food would have to come, not from a few miles away, but, let us say, from North Dakota, whence it must be transported across half the American continent, the Atlantic, and the Mediterranean and Black Seas to Odessa, unloaded at the same docks <sup>12</sup> from which the export had been sent, transported over the same railway lines that had moved the outgoing grain, and finally distributed to the hungry peasants. Of course, instead of this extraordinary arrangement of moving grain out of Russia, and moving other grain in to take its place, the logical position for the Soviet Government was to admit that there was plenty of grain in the country, that what Russia needed was not food, but cash. The difficulty was that though the Communists had with the N.E.P. returned to capitalism, they had tried to stop part way, refusing to allow heavy industry to make its own way, and failing to provide it with capital which they could not themselves provide nor secure from abroad because they could not come to terms with foreign claimants, national and private, against Russia. Both industry and agriculture needed cash or credit, but the needs of industry, partly because it was linked with the political structure of the state, came first.

During the year that had passed, the energies of the government had been devoted to the struggle with famine and the beginnings of the New Economic Policy. The famine was conquered, at least temporarily, and the full energies of the nation, and particularly the Party, were concentrated in the economic field to overcome the obstacles that had appeared with the N.E.P. The watch-word of this period was "recon-

<sup>12</sup> In January, 1923, the *S. S. Manitowac* was discharging a cargo of A.R.A. relief supplies in Odessa port while alongside the *S. S. Vladimir* was at the same moment loading a cargo of Russian wheat, barley, and rye for Hamburg.



struction," and in the minds of the responsible leaders this was applied first, to industry and second, to agriculture. The reason for this order was that while agriculture was in an extremely unproductive state, even for Russia, the crop of 1922 indicated that it could still produce enough to feed the country, with perhaps a small surplus. At least there was no danger of a recurrence of the debacle which had followed the application of military Communism and the drought of 1921. The same could not be said of industry. Here the situation was anything but encouraging. For, while light industry had responded to the stimulus of free trade and had developed with hopefulness during the spring and early summer of this year, heavy industry, on which the system of state capitalism ultimately rested, had gone steadily from bad to worse.

During this year, it was officially admitted, the industrial assets of Russia had decreased forty per cent.<sup>13</sup> The explanation of this decrease was the orgy of profit seeking which followed the legalization of trading under the N.E.P. In small trade this produced the Nepmen, a race of gouging profiteers. It also affected the factories which, though still controlled by the government, were subject to the dictation of the employees through their committees. The committees naturally seized the opportunity to improve the terrible conditions that had existed under military Communism. They began frantically to use up the raw materials that still remained, and then to devote all the proceeds of the sale of finished products to wages, leaving nothing for the replacement of raw materials, or for the upkeep or improvement of the plant. Many factories sold for less than it cost them to produce, until the exhaustion of their stocks of materials forced them to close. Added to these troubles was the lack of capital to finance business. The peasants needing farm implements could not, of course, pay cash. The coöperatives could not give them credit. The manufacturing establishments could not give credit because they had to pay the workmen's wages and pay cash for fuel to keep the plants running. The railroads added to the troubles by demanding cash for freight. Due to these factors, the

<sup>13</sup> Walter Duranty in *New York Times*, December 28, 1922.

optimism aroused by the brisk revival of commercial activity in the spring had quite evaporated, and the Party's leaders faced a collapse of heavy industry, with its train of misery and political disturbance.

Lenin explained the new situation in a speech to the delegates of the Third International at their meeting in the Kremlin on November 13. He pointed out that prior to the adoption of the N.E.P. twenty months before, the peasants, and even the townsmen were so exasperated and the situation was so critical that the Party decided to adopt the new policy. During the succeeding months there had been an improvement in the temper of the peasants, and small industry and commerce had been reborn and were working for the general good, but heavy industry was mortally ill. To revive it, one hundred million gold roubles (\$50,000,000) was needed at the minimum, and the government had only twenty million roubles (\$10,000,000) available.

It was out of the question to raise \$40,000,000 in Russia at this time. It might be raised abroad either by coming to terms with foreign capital or by exporting grain. The second method appeared to do less violence to Party principles and was the one adopted.

There was another reason for the export of grain, though it was not publicly discussed. The government up to this time had depended largely for its income on the grain tax. The collection of the tax after the harvest of 1922 exceeded all expectation in the quantity of grain secured, but in actual value it was a serious disappointment. Certain government controlled concerns, such as the State Bank and the Khlebprodukt and the coöperatives, went into the market, at about the time of the tax collection, and bought grain to sell in the cities and for export. Much to the consternation of the officials and the directors of these commercial enterprises, the price of grain fell so precipitously that by the middle of the winter of 1922-23, it was cheaper than it had been in the memory of any one then alive. This fall in price was in part due to the fact that the government was using the grain tax to pay its employees and the workmen in its plants. These employees and work-

men, constituting the city population, would logically have been the buyers of the peasant surplus, but since they were paid in grain they had no occasion to buy it. The government commercial organizations, therefore, found themselves obliged to sell at a loss, and the Soviet treasury saw its liquid resources, in the shape of grain, following the example of the ruble in its downward course. The most attractive solution of this difficulty, also, was to export grain. This would mean real money in the pockets of the government, of its commercial branches, and the successful peasants.

It would not help the peasants who were short of food, or the unemployed workmen, and the Government must have realized this and made a deliberate choice, taking the chance that foreign relief would care for these unfortunates or that they would somehow care for themselves.

The Soviet officials, then, committed themselves to a policy of grain export to finance their industries, while announcing a famine for which foreigners must provide the food. In reality, the meaning of the situation was that the period of emergency famine relief had passed, and that the problem was now one of reconstruction and distribution, the relief of poverty, not famine.

Its failure to persuade the Soviet Government to prohibit grain export did not cause the A.R.A. to restrict its activities. The officers of the Administration regarded the export and relief policies of the Soviet Government as callous and inhuman; nevertheless, they knew that regardless of their opinion Russians would die unless given food, if conditions were as described. Haskell believed the Soviet estimate of food needs was correct, and therefore, on December 19, 1922, the New York headquarters authorized the Russian Unit to extend the feeding to three million children and sick, as rapidly as the need developed. This fully met the Soviet request, and so far as the Russian officials and the A.R.A. were concerned this particular controversy was over.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The A.R.A. program embraced only children and sick for reasons already stated. This put no added burden on the Soviet relief agencies, for it enabled them to devote a greater proportion of their supplies to adult relief for which they were better suited.



## THE BASIS OF THE NEW FAMINE FORECAST

It was not generally known in America that such a controversy had been going on. But the talk of eight million "starving" had revived the heated discussions of Russia's needs and the way to meet them. Although the A.R.A. had authorized a threefold expansion of its child feeding program to meet the requests of the Soviet Government and the recommendations of its own workers, the voracious appetite of the relief controversialists in America was not appeased. In the general confusion resulting from the conflicting statements as to food surplus or shortage, debate arose and flourished, as it had the preceding year, as to the extent of the famine and as to whether the A.R.A. program was sufficient. The debate enlarged until the question of the reputed famine of 1922-23 merged in a discussion of a possible famine of 1923-24. Hoover, though in agreement with the Communists in this one particular, was again viewed with alarm, and roundly abused by the radical wing. Liberals, without very significant evidence, beat the Soviets and the A.R.A. with the same stick, holding both insensible to the suffering of the Russian people.

Besides those who were certain that A.R.A. policy was being determined by hostility to the Soviet Government, there were others who, without attributing ulterior motives to the A.R.A., were convinced that its policy was wrong, that the winter and spring of 1923 would see a revival of the horrors of the year just passed, and that despite the export of grain an appeal should be made for additional relief funds. The Commission on Russian Relief of the National Information Bureau, which had made an investigation in Russia in the autumn of 1922 when both Russians and Americans were pessimistic held this opinion.<sup>15</sup> For the reasons already set forth the officers of the

<sup>15</sup> *The Russian Famines 1921-22, 1922-23, Summary Report*, a pamphlet published by the Commission February 9, 1922, containing much valuable information. The members of the Commission who made the investigation and signed the report were: "Allen Wardwell, of Stetson, Jennings and Russell, attorneys at law, New York, member of the American Red Cross Commission to Russia, 1917; commissioner, 1918. Graham R. Taylor, then executive secretary of the American Association of Social Workers; Assistant to the American Ambassador to Russia, 1916-19. Allen T. Burns, director of the National Information Bureau since July 1, 1922; previously director of the Americanization Study of the Carnegie Corporation," p. 3.

A.R.A. felt that they should not make a new appeal and suggested as an alternative that some other body seek funds for reconstruction relief, which would meet the approval of the Russian officials and avoid the grain export issue. This suggestion was not taken up. Furthermore, by the time the National Information Bureau's report appeared, the A.R.A. men in Russia had come to the conclusion that conditions were much better than had appeared likely a few months before.

Quinn in Moscow wrote, February 1, that the A.R.A. program was meeting the need. A few days later Haskell, after a trip through the Ukraine, wrote: "The condition as regards food in Russia is much better than I ever anticipated it would be at this date. Even the South Ukraine is not in nearly as bad a situation as we anticipated from Grove's report. Harrington (from the Zaporosh area), who was in town to-day, advises me that not over twenty-five per cent of the people he is feeding would really be starving, if they were not fed, and seventy-five per cent come under the undernourishment classification."

These reports did not reach New York until after the Commission's conclusions were published, but there was nothing in the current A.R.A. advices from Russia to indicate a great increase in need, and the organization's policy necessarily had to be based on the advice of its responsible representatives in Russia, rather than on the prognostications of this or any other commission, based on conditions observed three or four months earlier. The New York office cabled Haskell that a new debate on Russia's needs, involving the grain export question, might open in America and that he should prepare for a repercussion in Russia. Haskell immediately wired back urging that the publication of the Soviet correspondence on grain exports be avoided, as it might destroy all chance of continuing the present program.

It is now known that the Russian people fortunately escaped the fate which many feared awaited them. The belief that Russia would experience a hard winter, that there would be a repetition on a smaller scale of the famine scenes of the previous year, was held by a good many of the A.R.A. men, and it was for that reason that such strenuous efforts were made to prevent the export of grain. But as the days went by, the

famine conditions did not reappear and those who had set January 1 as the date for the beginning of the new famine set the time three or four months later, and finally conceded that the anticipated troubles were not going to come. Many, having been convinced in the autumn of 1922 that a famine was inevitable, could not credit the reports which came of improving conditions. The change in the point of view of the A.R.A. men may be illustrated by the case of a Samara report. In the report of the Commission of the National Information Bureau it is stated:<sup>16</sup> "In Samara, the American Relief Administration representative told us that the situation this year was nearly a third worse than last year." Yet on May 3, 1923, this district reported that it was cutting down its allocation in the city of Samara from fourteen thousand to twelve thousand, because of the failure of the children to come to the kitchens for food. Other signs were not lacking to indicate that there was more food in Russia than had previously been believed. The food tax, a reliable barometer, showed that in January, instead of the anticipated yield of 280 million poods, the returns were certainly going to pass 300 millions and by March the total had reached 370 million poods, a hundred million more than had been anticipated.

By March Haskell had become fully convinced that food conditions in Russia were much better than any one had believed possible a few months before. This development completely altered the relationship between relief and the much debated grain export. On March 7, Haskell stated his views in an interview in which he said that while Russia had much undernourishment, there was little starvation and that what Russia needed was not more famine aid, but credit or money for her industries. Under such conditions he believed that grain export was justified. At the conclusion of an A.R.A. meeting on March 8, Hoover stated to the press that in view of the conditions described by Haskell a revision of relief policy would soon be necessary. In quoting Haskell, Hoover omitted references to grain export and to efforts then going on to raise funds for food relief as being aside from the point, which was the A.R.A.'s future policy. These statements, however, brought

<sup>16</sup> National Information Bureau, *op. cit.*, 12.



down on the A.R.A. the wrath of those who were still convinced that another famine was just around the corner.<sup>17</sup>

The air crackled with Russian controversy. There was a drive in America to recognize Russia. In the midst of this debate Hoover analyzed the Russian situation from the economic and relief point of view in a letter to C. V. Hibbard of the Y.M.C.A. "It is a hopeless illusion," Hoover wrote, "that there will be a flow of foreign savings, business, or skill into Russia, by the simple act of official recognition by our Government. Indeed there has been no appreciable investment in Russia from the several countries which have extended recognition although some of them are exporting capital in other directions. This is not an argument for, or against recognition, but simply a statement that the question of restored productivity to large industry rests on other fundamentals, such as the security and the freedom of initiative, and these can only be created through the institutions of Russia herself. The Russian people must work out all these problems in their own way. They might succeed upon the present line by the ultimate abandonment of large manufacture, for it is conceivable that they can do without large industry and establish a low grade agricultural state dependent upon exchange of food to other countries for manufactured necessities. All that charitable relief can hope to do is lift special groups from utter destitution up to the level of the general poverty and thus to prolong life for the future."<sup>18</sup>

As for the nature of relief, Hoover said that while disease,

<sup>17</sup> Hoover's omission of Haskell's reference to grain export was seized upon as evidence of sinister designs against Russia, though the press had already made this reference public. A representative of Rosta (the Russian [Soviet] Telegraph Agency) asked for and secured from the A.R.A. a copy of Haskell's cable. This he turned over to the *Nation* (N. Y.), which savagely attacked Hoover in a leading article (March 21, 1923), entitled "Mr. Hoover Stabs Russia." The burden of this article was that by omitting the grain export reference, Hoover was up to his old tricks of trying to injure Russia and to hamper relief. Curiously enough, in reproducing what purported to be the Haskell cable, the *Nation* also omitted a paragraph. This was reproduced in a later issue but without its context. The editors declined, however, to publish a reply by Edgar Rickard to their attack, on the ground that the reply was not true. The *Survey* (April 1, 1923), echoed the *Nation* complimenting it for performing a public service, and concurred in the charges against the A.R.A. Later (May 15, 1923), the *Survey* published a statement by a member of the A.R.A.

<sup>18</sup> The full text of this letter is in Appendix A, Doc. XV.

poverty and reconstruction would call for help much longer, relief by the import of food might be discontinued after the harvest.

The Catholic trials in Moscow came in March; then followed the cancellation (April 10) by the State Department of permission to Mme. Kalenina, wife of the President of the All Russian Central Executive Committee, to come to America to solicit relief; and the Red Church Congress and the deposing of the Patriarch Tikhon. Relations between Russia and the world reached the point of greatest intensity in May. On May 7, Lord Curzon, British Foreign Secretary, sent an ultimatum to Moscow, threatening a diplomatic break because of alleged Soviet violations of agreement. On May 10, Vorovsky, Soviet emissary in Rome and representative at the Near East Conference then assembling, was assassinated at Lausanne.

In the meantime, the press had carried dispatches from Moscow (April 26) telling of the meeting of A.R.A. District Supervisors in Moscow, and their reports of improved conditions and the plans for A.R.A. withdrawal. There still appeared occasionally in the press until the end of May reports from relief agents and others, of 5,000,000 starving on the Volga and in the Ukraine, but in the minds of the A.R.A. men, continuously in contact with the situation in ninety-five per cent of the "afflicted" regions, there was no doubt that the day of mass relief and the importation of food had passed. Foreign help might still ameliorate the effects of poverty. The Russian people and their government must remove its causes.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE NEW PROGRAM IN OPERATION

#### TENTATIVE REPUDIATION OF THE RIGA AGREEMENT

THE events narrated in the last chapter related to affairs which, though closely bound up with relief operations, were largely external to Russia. During that period of disturbance without, all was by no means calm and benignly serene within. It is true that following the transport crisis and Haskell's ultimatum in April, there was an era of peace—and hard work—which lasted through the pleasant summer months. The A.R.A. feeding figures surged up in leaps of millions. There were no problems of a serious nature in its relations with the Soviet Government, and such minor difficulties as arose were quickly adjusted with the intelligent and amiable coöperation of Lander, the new Soviet Representative Plenipotentiary. No seriously disturbing clouds appeared above the horizon until the time came when the Soviets and the A.R.A. were ready to put into effect their revised relief programs. Then without warning the storm broke. It threatened to stop the new A.R.A. program when it had barely begun. Fortunately this did not happen, but the calm was gone, not to be restored until more crises brought the real leaders of the government to take a hand, as they had done the year before, in restraining and regulating the activities of their somewhat fanatical subordinates. It is convenient to treat each subject of controversy separately, but the reader will bear in mind that many of these matters were at issue at the same time and within the period of events described in the last chapter.

Early in the preceding May, before the continuation of the A.R.A. program after the harvest had been decided upon, Haskell sounded Kamenev as to the attitude of the Russian authorities. Kamenev said that his government would be



agreeable to the A.R.A.'s remaining, but intimated that because of the much changed situation it would be desirable to revise the Riga Agreement. Haskell stated immediately, orally and by letter, that the A.R.A. could continue its work in Russia only under the provisions of the Riga Agreement. To this Kamenev replied in a letter (May 20, 1922), two paragraphs of which are important: <sup>1</sup>

"Referring to our conversation on the subject of the A.R.A. continuing work in Russia after September 15th, I beg herewith to advise you that the Russian Government most gladly and gratefully agrees to the A.R.A. continuing its work of relief to the needy classes of the population of the R.S.F.S.R. . . .

"I am fully of your understanding that it is unnecessary to conclude a supplementary agreement specially for this purpose, for I presume an exchange of letters between you and me will suffice."

The question of a new agreement seemed definitely and finally settled. But it was not so.

On Sunday afternoon, October 1, 1922, a messenger from Lander's office placed on Haskell's desk an undated memorandum addressed to the Director of the A.R.A. Russian Unit, which began with these disturbing paragraphs:

"I have promised to present to you the general principles which, in the opinion of my government, must underlie the future work of the foreign relief organizations, and which must, in one form or another, be included in the treaties, agreements, or instructions on the question of further relief work."

The memorandum then proceeded to express the gratitude of the Soviet Government to foreign organizations and to indicate the changed policy due to the change in conditions.

"The new organization, the Central Committee for Fighting the Consequences of Famine (Posledgol), will direct its work along this line, the line of regenerating the ruined industries,

<sup>1</sup> The other paragraphs deal with the A.R.A. program, the probable date of liquidation, and the gratitude of the Russian Government to the American people and the A.R.A.

of raising the productivity of our agriculture, and at the same time of supporting and feeding those whom the famine and the miseries accompanying it have thrown off the normal course of their lives and rendered incapable of immediately returning to it, i.e., orphans, widows, invalids, refugees."

The Memorandum then explained that while under the stress of acute famine the government had accepted relief when and where it was offered and frequently by a sacrifice to local interest. The new situation and reduced appropriations raised the question of requiring foreign relief organizations to pay, partly, and in some cases entirely, such costs of their operations as freight, upkeep of equipment, and alteration and upkeep of buildings, formerly borne by the Soviet Government.

The memorandum stated a number of principles that "must be made the basis of agreements and instructions." Those relating to the A.R.A., briefly summarized, were as follows:

In feeding: No more kitchens or other relief stations of any kind would be permitted in places where similar Soviet institutions already existed. Dry rations must be supplied to the existing Soviet stations according to a fixed norm agreed to by both parties. Where new kitchens were opened, permission must be secured from the Soviet Government in advance. Full control of contributed foodstuffs would be allowed to foreign organizations, through the necessary employees and through the central office. The districts where relief was to be given, the extent of allocations, and the volume and method of work must be determined by terms of agreement with the Soviet Government, represented by the Posledgol.

This paragraph, if adopted, would at one stroke sweep away the entire A.R.A. system of distribution and control, creating in its stead a system whereby the sole function of the A.R.A. would be to turn over supplies to Soviet institutions. Under such an arrangement no such provision for control as was suggested could be effective. Then followed paragraphs dealing with clothing relief and student feeding, placing the control in the hands of the government and student associations.

Innovations in the Food Remittance system were even more far reaching. Food packages were to be divided into several categories. Those for distribution among needy groups would

be exempt from import and transportation charges. Bulk sales to institutions and trade unions for resale at low prices to members of unions would be exempt from import duty, but must pay a reduced transportation charge, to be included in the price. Packages for specific individuals<sup>2</sup> must pay both import and transportation charges, except when consigned for distribution by the trade unions, in which case a special reduced rate was possible. The administrative expenses for the individual parcels would be borne by the foreign relief organizations, the government assuming the expenses for other categories. Then came this significant paragraph:

"The Trade Union Organizations are to be drawn into the closest participation in the distribution of parcels. The most desirable type of parcel is the so-called nameless bulk parcels which are distributed among the most needy members of the unions. It is also necessary to grant the Russian Trade Union the right of ordering and buying parcels in preference to other persons and organizations. The representatives of the Soviet Government and the Trade Union reserve the right of controlling the distribution of individual parcels and of refusing to permit the delivery of parcels in cases where speculation or abuse is discovered."

This paragraph would, if put into effect, destroy the A.R.A.-Soviet Food Remittance Agreement, just as the preceding paragraph would destroy the Riga document.

As for medical supplies, the same general principles were to apply; and hence the selection of institutions and allocation of supplies must be only by the agreement with the Narkomzdrav (Commissariat of Health). The actual delivery of supplies must be only by the Narkomzdrav, the contributing organization coöperating.

The main part of the communication ended with the ingenuous observation that there was nothing new in these principles. The "practical" conclusions which the writer of the memorandum drew were: first, that staffs of relief organizations should be reduced to be in proportion to the needs and

<sup>2</sup> This type made up the bulk of the A.R.A. Food Remittance undertaking and, like all other relief supplies, was free from customs and transport charges.



the requirements of the work, though there was no objection to volunteer workers or those whose expenses were paid by a foreign organization; second, that close contact should be maintained to avoid misunderstanding; third, that new agreements must be drawn up in the light of these principles.

There were further remarks relative to the principles applying to foreign aid in reconstruction of industry and agriculture, which did not apply in particular to the A.R.A., and the memorandum closed with these words:

"In presenting the above to your attention I am hoping for your prompt and favorable reply both on the general question and on the separate questions which follow from it; I trust that the basis proposed by us will be entirely acceptable to you in your further successful work, for which I wish to thank you in advance.

LANDER."

Haskell could and did favor Lander with a prompt reply, if he could not give a favorable one to a proposition which would cut away the foundation of the entire operation that he was directing. Haskell's reply is quoted in full:

"2 October, 1922.

"Dear Sir:—

"Your undated and unnumbered letter incorporating the general principles which, in the opinion of your Government, must underlie the future work of the foreign relief organizations, and be incorporated in agreements, etc., was received by me yesterday. I recollect no promise on your part, nor request on mine, regarding the furnishing of this report.

"It has always been my endeavor to reduce to a minimum that part of the operating expenses borne by the Soviet Government and to avoid, where practicable, any duplication in operation and, for this reason, since my return from America I have greatly reduced the number of A.R.A. kitchens and have increased the percentage of institutional feeding, under American inspection. Furthermore the funds (measured on gold standard) furnished by the Soviet Government for operating expenses have been cut for October to less than one-third of the requirements for August, and it is hoped that further economies can be effected.

"Notwithstanding the new policy of the American Relief

Administration to work more through existing Russian institutions, there is no possibility of its continuing unless the fundamental guarantees prescribed in the Riga Agreement of 20 August, 1921, remain in full force and effect.

"Neither the American people nor the American Relief Administration would for a moment consider continuing to pour relief supplies into Russia unless the principles upon which American charity has always been given can be guaranteed.

"As you well know, the American Relief Administration in all of its operations is working under definite agreements with the Soviet Government. Under these obligations of the Soviet authorities, the American Relief Administration has shipped into Russia large quantities of food and medical supplies. Large orders have, within the last few days, been placed in America to protect our operation throughout the coming winter.

"I can quite realize that the time may have arrived when the Soviet Government no longer requires the assistance of the American Relief Administration. If this time has arrived, I should be officially advised in order that I may cancel orders abroad and commence liquidating.

"In a relief operation carried on at such a distance from its base in America you will understand that several months' supplies must be constantly in hand, either in the feeding areas, central warehouses, in ports or afloat, and for this reason it is quite impracticable to cut off all relief measures over night—a certain period of time is necessary for liquidation. Therefore, information well in advance of any determination on the part of the Government to request the withdrawal of the American Relief Administration is essential.

"It is quite impossible for so large an organization as the American Relief Administration to function under any uncertainty as to whether the terms of agreements already entered into are to be suddenly repudiated.

"With reference to the Food Remittance operation: Your attention is invited to the fact that if this form of relief is no longer acceptable to the Soviet Government, that the right to terminate the same is provided in the agreement under which it operates, and can be brought to a final conclusion 90 days after notice to that effect. These 90 days were agreed to as the minimum required for the liquidation of the American Relief Administration's commitments.

"In so far as the distribution of clothing remittance parcels is concerned, that question is quite irrelevant, due to the fact that no such operation is yet under way and no agreement has been entered into. The terms under which such an operation might be carried on are naturally subject to discussion.

"You will realize that it is quite necessary for me to know definitely, and at once, whether the terms of our agreements are to be guaranteed to us or not and, if not, when does the Soviet Government desire that our liquidation should begin.

"In view of the above and due to the fact that within the last few days we have cabled requisitions for the purchase of several million dollars worth of foodstuffs for the coming winter, I am compelled to insist upon an answer to the following two questions by 12 o'clock, noon, on Wednesday, October 4th, in order that time will then remain for me to cable cancellations of these orders:

"(1) Does the Soviet Government desire to terminate the Food Remittance Operation under the existing agreement?

"(2) Does the Soviet Government intend to maintain the sanctity of the Riga Agreement during the time which the American Relief Administration continues its relief operation in Russia?

"Very truly yours,

"WM. N. HASKELL,  
"Director in Russia."

This letter was delivered to Lander at 2 p.m., October 2, and five hours later Haskell had Lander's reply, which was obviously a hurried and sincere attempt to pour oil on the waters which suddenly had become so violently troubled. Lander wrote as follows:

"2 October, 1922  
No. 5383  
Moscow.

"My dear Colonel Haskell:—

"I greatly regret that my last letter expressing my Government's opinion on the further course of the Relief work has raised a number of questions which are, undoubtedly, a result of mutual misunderstanding and of a lack of clarity.

"My letter was written in the order of great urgency, after office hours, which explains the lack of number and date. I



was hastening to acquaint you with our new views on this question in order to clear up all its details before the 15th October, the date when the Central Relief Committee is to be liquidated and the old methods of work abandoned.

"I have repeatedly promised Mr. Quinn, your assistant, to furnish this information and program, but unfortunately have not been able to fulfill my promise before.

"The above letter was addressed not only to you but to absolutely all the Foreign Relief Organizations, and I therefore, dwelt on all the particular peculiarities of their work.

"In speaking of the number of personnel and its reduction I least of all had in mind the A.R.A. I agree entirely with the view taken by you in your letter of the 2nd inst., on this question, and consider it my duty to state I have deeply appreciated your sympathetic attitude towards our needs, that I know of the steps taken by you with a view towards reducing our expenses, and wish to assure you that the Soviet Government had no complaints of this kind against the A.R.A.

"As regards guarantees of the principles which would insure the possibility of the continuation of your work, I am in entire agreement with your point of view, and note that Mr. Kamenev had expressed the same opinion during our last conversation with him. All my proposals and suggestions regarding new forms of relief work refer to those details of the work which are connected with the reorganization of the Relief work on a country-wide scale and which are already being carried out by you, such as, for instance, the supplying of our institutions, etc.

"In making the proposals and suggestions, as desirable to us, I was and still am certain that we could and should come to an agreement on all those practical questions, and I want to emphasize again that the practical course taken by you in your work excludes any possibility of mutual misunderstandings and confusion.

"While raising the question of supplementary instructions and new conditions of the future work I, as well as my Government, did not intend to raise the question of the revision of the Riga Agreement or of any withdrawing of any of the guarantees given to you.

"If our answer on the question of clothes parcels has been delayed, it was due exclusively to the fact that it was necessary to have the agreement of some of the absent members of the

Government, particularly that of Mr. Chicherin, whose arrival has been expected from day to day, and who, as I have just been informed, is to come to-morrow, October 3rd. I shall furnish a reply to this as well as all the other questions raised in your letter within the time requested by you, but I consider that I have already answered the basic question which I have discussed with Mr. Kamenev, and who has agreed with me on that point.

"I wish to repeat that the question of forms and methods of the work does not involve the revision of the Agreement, but is merely a question of new instructions to be mutually agreed upon and coördinated with the work of the Central Government Organization for struggling with the results of the famine.

"This is the only way in which my letter ought to be understood; this is all I had in mind.

"Assuring you of it,

"I am,

"Very faithfully yours,

"K. LANDER,

"Representative Plenipotentiary R.S.F.S.R., with A.R.A."

At 11 o'clock on the morning of October 4, one hour before the expiration of Haskell's ultimatum, Lander appeared at the A.R.A. office with a further reply, which was to serve as an official confirmation of the position which he had taken in his letter of two days before, undoubtedly written on his own responsibility. The supplementary letter was as follows:

"4 October, 1922,  
"Moscow.

"My dear Colonel Haskell:—

"Supplementing my letter No. 5383 of the 2nd inst. and replying to yours of the same date on the question of the future course of the A.R.A. work in Russia, I have been authorized to inform you that in our Government circles the question of repudiating or revising the guarantees given to the A.R.A. on the basis of the Riga Agreement has never so far been raised. This refers to the operations in both feeding and remittances.

"As regards my memorandum of the 30th ultimo, the questions raised in it refer only to the details of the work connected with the change of methods and conditions under which it is

to be carried out, and which are subject to discussion and negotiation for the purpose of coördinating the work.

"Yours very truly,

"K. LANDER,

"Representative Plenipotentiary R.S.F.S.R. with A.R.A.

"A. REICHMANN, Chief Secretary."

Lander repeated to Haskell his explanations of the reasons of the memorandum, making a particular point of the fact that it was written primarily for certain other foreign relief organizations, which were actually bringing in but little relief, but were encumbered with large staffs, which were a great expense to the government. Haskell did not question the explanation, but repeated what he had already stated in his letter; namely, that the A.R.A. was ready to do its utmost to reduce the expenses of the government and to coöperate with it in every way, but that he would absolutely refuse to consider any alteration of the fundamental principles upon which the work was conducted. At this interview Lander was clearly embarrassed and unhappy. It seemed—and subsequent events confirmed it—that Lander had been forced to send the memorandum against his inclination and judgment.

The pressure came from two quarters. The most active, and the one which continued to be exerted during the final months of the operation, was that of the officials of the Posledgol, the official Relief Organization. During the preceding year, the Pomgol had been active enough in the realm of propaganda in connection with the campaign of collecting funds and supplies for relief, but in the actual distribution of relief commodities had played an unimportant and inconspicuous part compared with other official bodies. There had been, of course, here and there through the famine regions, local organizations of the Pomgol which conducted kitchens for short periods and at irregular intervals. Such supplies as they had were irregularly received and soon exhausted, for the principal and really effective part of the Soviet Government's relief was the seed distribution, which was carried out through other channels. Under the new arrangement the Posledgol succeeded the Pomgol, with even smaller resources for famine relief, and relief officials saw their hopes of increasing the scope



of their activities go glimmering. The control of the distribution of foreign relief, as proposed in the memorandum, would have given them something to do and much prestige. Pressure also came from Communist Die-hards who disapproved of the Riga Agreement, hated the A.R.A., and thought the end justified any means that might be required to deprive it of its independent position.<sup>3</sup> The attack on the Food Remittance system in which the trade unions figured largely, was in line with the attitude which had been taken toward this division of relief work from the beginning. Everywhere in the life of the Russian communities, the members of official trade unions received privileges and prerogatives denied to others. These privileges ran all the way from a higher representation in the government to the privilege of buying more cheaply in government stores and receiving special tickets to the theatres. To the trade union leaders the food remittance system seemed to work primarily for the benefit of the bourgeoisie, whose destruction the revolution was supposed to have consummated. It was true that the unions did not benefit particularly in this work, for those who received packages were chiefly the people who had relatives abroad, and in the majority of cases these belonged to the former middle class. The general relief packages, distributed as a result of special gifts, were in the main given to members of the professions, doctors, teachers, nurses, and artists, for whom they were specifically designated by the givers, and who, being without government privileges and without adequate income, were unquestionably much worse off than the unionists. The general feeding, which was carried out with the profits of the Food Remittances, the trade unionists shared equally with other classes, but this was not sufficient to make up for the violation of the principle of the proletarian dictatorship which was inherent in the Food Remittance system. The trade unionists' support of the memorandum and their desire to make the Food Remittance system a vehicle of an additional privilege of their class is understandable.

<sup>3</sup> A report presented to the All Russian Central Executive Committee complained that too much independence had been given to representatives of foreign relief societies and that specifically the A.R.A., the most important of the foreign organizations, was likewise the most independent and detached from government influence. This, it was pointed out, was an unfortunate state of affairs, which should be corrected.

Lander's hasty retreat and the official assurances that the memorandum did not mean at all what it said, formally, though not finally, ended this incident. It appears from circumstantial evidence that at a meeting of the Soviet relief officials, including the provincial plenipotentiaries, all agreed that it would be advisable to control the A.R.A. operations. Haskell's feeling about the Riga and other agreements, as well as Kamenev's assurances, were well known. Still, they may have reasoned, nothing ventured, nothing gained. It would do no harm to take a chance, and find out if Haskell were as strong in his convictions as he pretended to be. That point, at least, was settled. He was.

#### THE ATTEMPT TO CONTROL THE A.R.A. FEEDING

The desired goal, however, might be sought by other routes. During the latter part of October and early November, the District Supervisors began to pepper the A.R.A. headquarters in Moscow with enquiries about an alleged new agreement between the A.R.A. and the government, whereby the control of the A.R.A. kitchens was to be turned over to Communist officials. The explanation of these inquiries soon came to light. On September 25, five days before Lander handed his memorandum to Haskell, a circular letter, signed by Madame Kameneva, had been addressed to "all central committees of the Posledgol of the autonomous republics, district and gubernia Posledgol committees, and government representatives." The letter went on to describe changes that were to be put into effect, in the following words:

"By reason of the agreement arrived at with the A.R.A. according to which foodstuffs to all our active children's homes and children's kitchens will be issued by the A.R.A. in dry form, while the A.R.A. retains only the function of control to see that foodstuffs imported by the A.R.A. shall be properly used up to the arrival at their destination, you are requested, immediately upon receiving this letter, to take steps to carry out the above mentioned child-feeding arrangement.

"To perform this, a special Commission, consisting of the representatives of the Posledgol, Representative of the R.S.F.S.R., and of the A.R.A., must inspect all A.R.A. kitchens

actually in operation, and only such kitchens will be left as are indispensable to the carrying out of the new feeding program.

"All the other A.R.A. kitchens must be closed, and children fed in them transferred to the active kitchens.

"The A.R.A. kitchens left active according to the decision of the above mentioned Commission must be immediately turned over to the Posledgol, which will have the responsibility in the future for the upkeep and management of these kitchens on the local funds of the Posledgol.

"The number of kitchens left by the decision of the above mentioned Commission must be communicated to the Plenipotentiary Representative by wire.

"Also, you must address yourself by wire to the R.S.F.S.R. Representative in case of any misunderstanding.

"Instructions about the order of A.R.A. control for the proper use of foodstuffs by A.R.A. will be sent separately.

"(Signed)

"Vice-Chairman of the Central Posledgol: KAMENEVA,

"R.S.F.S.R. Representative: LANDER,

"Secretary: WELLER.

"September 25th, 1922. No. 80."

Madame Kameneva, whose restless energy was of a quality of that of her famous brother, Trotzky, and who provided the driving force in the Posledgol, had, it seems, sent this letter in anticipation that the A.R.A. would either acquiesce in a revision of the Riga Agreement, or be compelled to do so by Soviet Government pressure. Things turned out otherwise. Nevertheless, the interchange of letters between Haskell and Lander did not, as might have been expected, cause the Posledgol to recall this circular letter. On the contrary, on October 31, another memorandum addressed to the same provincial officials confirmed the one already quoted and gave additional instructions for carrying it out:

"In addition to the Circular of September 25th, 1922, No. 80, you are hereby ordered to carry through the measures mentioned in it through all foreign organizations working in your district.

"(Signed).

"KAMENEVA,

"LANDER."



"Moscow, October 31, 1922.

"To all Autonomous Republics, District and Gubernia Posledgol and Government Representatives:

"Dear Comrades:

"By the above mentioned Circulars Nos. 80-82 referring to investigation of kitchens of all foreign organizations in your region, which must result in the closing of most of them, all products must in the future be delivered to our Children's institutions, Department of Education and Representatives of Children's Relief Committees of VTSIK [All Russian Central Executive Committee].

"In order to avoid administrative confusion we recommend that the Department of Education and the representatives of the Children's Relief Committee of VTSIK should participate in all the work of operating the kitchens which were formerly managed by foreign organizations and which will now be left to function under a new order of product distribution by the Special Committee; but the final control is to remain in the hands of the POSLEDGOL.

"(Signed)

"KAMENEVA,

Manager, Foreign Department VTSIK Posledgol.  
Moscow, October 31, 1922, No. 829."

There could be no excuse for these orders on the ground that Mme. Kameneva and Lander were under the impression that the A.R.A. was willing to surrender its control to the government. They were diametrically opposed to the written assurances given Haskell in the name of the Soviet Government. Naturally, they confirmed the suspicion that a new attempt to gain control was on foot.

There resulted an epidemic of troubles, lasting two or three months, which, though they did not raise any absolutely vital issues, did harass and bedevil the District Supervisors. In Kazan, for example, there was an attempt to close all open kitchens in the city, although the A.R.A. had reduced the number of kitchens from twenty to four, which were maintained because there was need of them. In Saratov, the Government Plenipotentiary Representative issued orders to his subordinates to take over control of all A.R.A. kitchens throughout the district, and in one of the sub-districts, Derg-

atchee, the government representative put guards in the A.R.A. warehouses and forbade entrance without his permission. Similar occurrences were reported from Samara, Nikolaiev, and Simbirsk. In Odessa and Kharkov, the Americans observed and reported a less friendly attitude on the part of the government representative. In Moscow, there was a curious attempt to get control of an A.R.A. ambulatory, which gave free treatment and medicines to anyone in Moscow who needed them. The representative of the government proposed that no one be admitted to the ambulatory without a card of admission, the cards to be distributed, 85 per cent by the Labor Unions, and 15 per cent by the A.R.A. In case the A.R.A. would not agree to this arrangement, the representative intimated that he could see no way to provide fuel and necessary repairs for the ambulatory. In many places, the failure to support the A.R.A. was explained as due to lack of funds, and it was noticed that there was usually a lack of funds for the maintenance of open kitchens.

The A.R.A. endeavored to meet the Soviet wishes in this latter regard, but declined to agree to the abolition of open kitchens, for in this more was involved than the mere matter of finances. In closed institutions, the government could order exclusions because of the political antecedents of a child's parents. Open kitchens under A.R.A. control insured that any child who could prove his need would be admitted. The A.R.A. felt that in some localities it was necessary to maintain such open kitchens, otherwise hungry children who had no place in the Communist scheme of things would be left to perish.

To straighten out these difficulties, which were becoming more and more annoying, Haskell on November 4, 1922, wrote Lander, reminding him that he had promised to advise his provincial representatives that there was no change in relationship between the Soviet Government and the A.R.A., and suggesting that unnecessary difficulties would be caused by the erroneous idea that there had been a change in procedure and policy. Furthermore, he wrote:

"I have noticed a tendency on the part of the Soviet authorities to influence the location of our kitchens with a distinct

effort on their part to throw obstacles in the way of any 'open kitchens' that we find necessary to maintain.

"We are constantly advised from the districts that funds are not available for the maintenance of 'open kitchens' but there is no difficulty in providing for closed institutions. For example, in Kazan there are but four open kitchens maintained and it is impossible for our district supervisor to obtain the necessary funds for their maintenance.

"In case there still remains any doubt as to the policy of the American Relief Administration, I repeat that we are endeavoring to increase our feeding in closed institutions where such institutions are needy and will distribute our foodstuffs in accordance with our requirements, will keep records necessary to us, and where the proper inspection can be exercised.

"Notwithstanding this, we do not and never have stated that we have abandoned the open kitchen idea entirely. I propose to maintain such open kitchens as may be necessary to reach children who in our opinion are necessitous, either in places where closed institutions already exist or where no institutions exist.

"Under the terms of the Riga Agreement, the American Relief Administration is entitled to determine where its feeding will be done and the Soviet Government is obligated to maintain the expenses of such feeding stations.

"By withholding funds and making it difficult for our district supervisors in their work connected with the open kitchens nothing can be gained, for the reason that unless this attitude is changed the policy of the American Relief Administration of maintaining feeding in closed institutions will likewise be changed. I shall instruct my district supervisors that if funds are not forthcoming for the maintenance of such open kitchens as in their judgment they still find necessary to maintain, that the foodstuffs for the closed institutions shall be discontinued at the same time."

Despite this letter and the repeated assurances by Lander that all misunderstandings would be cleared up, the difficulties of keeping the feeding going in the districts continued to increase, and the explanation always given was that one branch of the government could not get from another branch the funds required to handle the American relief commodities.



## FINANCIAL CRISIS

During the months of October, November, and December, while the negotiations concerning the winter program were being carried on, the feeding operations, which with the arrival of the harvest had been reduced from over ten million in August to less than one million in September, began slowly to gather momentum again. The progress, however, was difficult and slow. Naturally enough, the district plenipotentiaries and the local officials, having received instructions from their superiors in Moscow that they were to take over the A.R.A. kitchens, made every effort to do so, and also to prevent any expansion by the A.R.A. not in accordance with their plans. On the other hand, the Americans, having received the assurance from their headquarters, that there was to be no change in control, and that the only difference in the procedure would be the utilization of closed institutions wherever possible, insisted on following their own instructions.

When the news came to the District Supervisors that their allocations had been increased, they proceeded to distribute the additional rations through open kitchens in the towns and villages where there were no closed institutions or where there were hungry children whom the institutions did not care for. But it was this sort of expansion that the Posledgol most vigorously opposed. The District Supervisors found it increasingly difficult to get from any source the funds to meet such essential expenses as pay for laborers who unloaded the cars, fuel for the kitchens, and transportation of products from railhead to the villages. The latter was always a particularly difficult problem to meet. The local officials were unable to do anything, because they had no money to pay the horse owners and no longer had the power to requisition their services. The paradoxical situation frequently developed in which the A.R.A., the Capitalistic exploiter of the poor (according to the Communist press), was pressing the Communists to apply their theories and make the rich peasants help the poorer members of the communities.

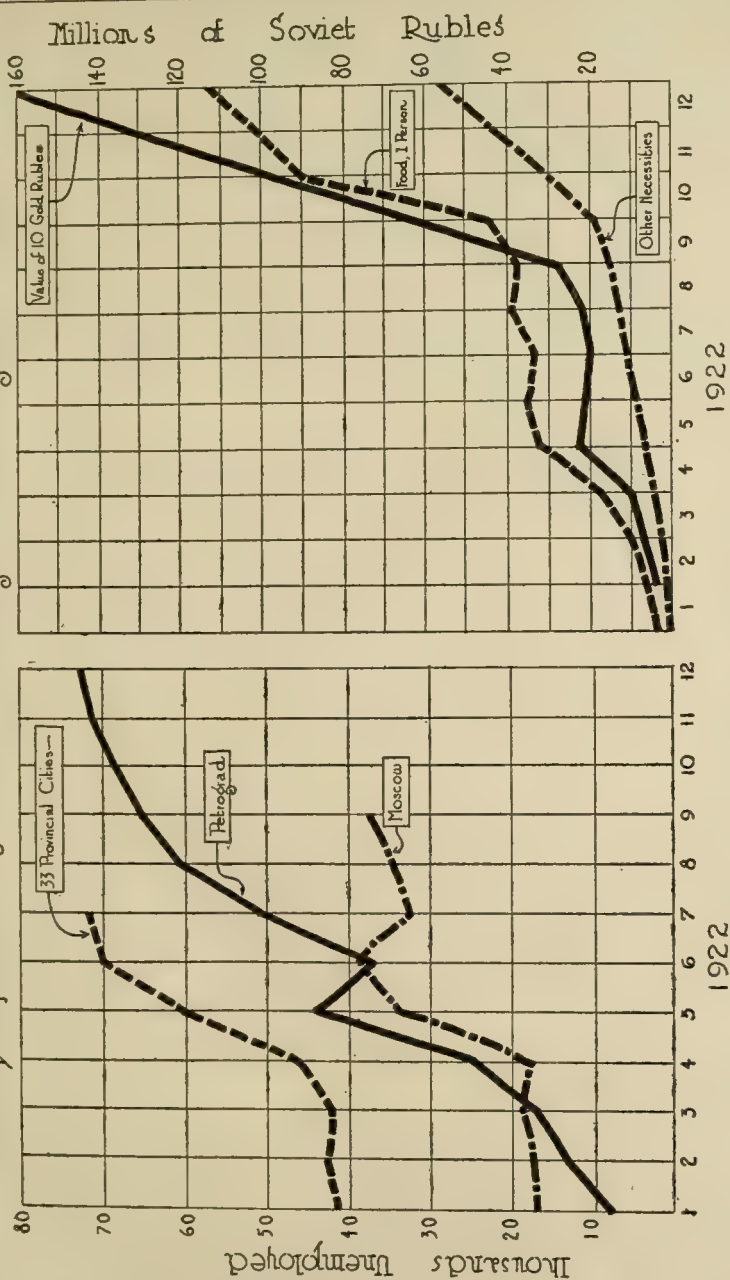
Quinn's <sup>4</sup> attempts during December to get the Moscow gov-

<sup>4</sup> Acting Director of the Russian Unit in Haskell's absence.

ernment to assume full financial responsibility for the district operations were unsuccessful. In these discussions over finances the position of the A.R.A. was this: After estimating the needs of the country and after surveying its own resources, the Soviet Government had asked the A.R.A. to continue its operations and had agreed that this be done on the basis of the Riga Agreement. The Riga Agreement provided that the expenses incident to distribution (transportation, warehousing, labor, etc.) be borne by the Soviet Government. The Soviet Government was not meeting these charges, and in consequence the feeding operations were being held up. Quinn failed to get satisfaction from the government for two reasons. First, the A.R.A. program was relatively so much smaller and the need so much less than the preceding year, that the pressure to compel the Soviet officials to adhere strictly to their contract was not very effective. Second, the Communists were in the process of changing from Communism to State Capitalism. They were endeavoring to do several difficult things: to reestablish a credit system which had been finally wiped out by the decree of January 19, 1920; to stabilize the currency which, having fallen to 1,769,000 paper rubles for ten gold rubles by January, 1922, collapsed to 233,750,000 paper rubles by January, 1923; and to balance their budget which had a deficit in 1921 of 21,076,816 millions of rubles, or 84.1 of the total expenditure; <sup>5</sup> and to get funds to buy raw materials and subsidize heavy industry. Official Communism had undergone a remarkable transformation since 1918, when the Commissar of Finance apologized for speaking of finance because it should not exist in a Socialistic community. In 1922-23, it was being spoken of to the exclusion of nearly everything else. The grain export, already discussed, was only one of the many expedients adopted in the frantic struggle to escape from the financially barren desert in which the government found itself. As that reacted on relief, so did the other expedients. The A.R.A. was caught in the struggle, and the work of feeding the hungry

<sup>5</sup> These figures are from S. S. Katzenellenbaum, *Russian Currency and Banking, 1914-1924*, London, 1925. Chapter III. Other figures given by the same author, illustrate the nightmarish situation at this time. The amount of paper money in circulation July 1, 1914, was 1,630 million of rubles; on January 1, 1923, it was 1,994,500,000 millions. Price index (all Russia) 1913 = 1; January 1, 1923 = 21,015,000.

## Unemployment &amp; Cost of Living in Petrograd - 1922.





suffered. The Central Government decreed that local expenditures for the A.R.A. be met by local governments; but local governments in the famine regions, naturally, were destitute. The railroads were authorized to demand cash for their services, but no cash was furnished Lander, the A.R.A., or anyone else to pay them. While realizing the difficulties of the Soviets, the Americans felt that the support of relief, having been promised, was as much an obligation on the government as, for example, the support of the Red Army. They could not escape the suspicion that the groups hostile to the A.R.A. were not greatly distressed by its troubles, which, if sufficiently harassing, might force the Americans to surrender the control of their operations.

On December 19, Quinn received word from the A.R.A. headquarters in New York that the funds available would permit the extension of child feeding to a full three million, which could be continued until the harvest. He was authorized to convey this information to the government with the reminder that this would meet fully their request for A.R.A. assistance. With this information, Quinn was able to take a stronger lead in urging the government to remove the difficulties that hampered the work. On December 26, he wrote Kamenev informing him of the news he had received from America, but pointing out that "this extension of our program is, however, dependent on the extent of the child need as developed in the coming months, our ability to efficiently expand, and upon our receiving the proper coöperation and support from your government." He then reminded Kamenev that the question of finance was causing continuous trouble and that "until a satisfactory solution of this question is arrived at, the expansion of our program to three million will be delayed and its continuity jeopardized."

This letter did not bring about any noticeable improvement. In fact the government continued to maintain what Quinn described as a "bilious attitude." Instead of increasing its support as the program increased, it reduced it. Lander informed Quinn that the number of railway cars at the disposal of the A.R.A. must be reduced by more than half, and that the government could no longer afford to permit the use of

the personnel houses, unless the A.R.A. would pay for the space used over and above the Soviet housing regulations. The government refused to allow four cases of alcohol, brought in by the A.R.A. Medical Division, to be distributed, unless it were turned over to the Narkomzdrav (Commissariat of Health). Finally, the government declared that it would no longer pay the salaries of the Russian employees of the A.R.A. engaged in inspection work.

Most of these matters were of minor importance in themselves. Their significance was that they constituted an official declaration that the Soviet Government would not fulfill certain of the obligations it had assumed by the Riga Agreement, and later reaffirmed. In an attempted justification of this fact, it was suggested that the value of the supplies being imported by the A.R.A. did not justify the cost of distribution. A section of the Central Committee of the Posledgol reported to the Tenth All Russian Congress of Soviets, which, thereupon, passed a number of resolutions, directing the Central Committee of the Posledgol, among other things, to have all foreign organizations deliver their help through government institutions, to insist on immediately reducing the number of open kitchens, and to "revise the agreement with the A.R.A. which puts a burden on the districts out of proportion to the importance of the A.R.A. help." <sup>6</sup>

Quinn immediately took up with Lander, in conference and by letter, the question raised by the Posledgol as to the value of the A.R.A. ration. He showed that 31 per cent of the A.R.A. feeding at this time was already in hospitals and institutions and that the expansion must be in open kitchens, since the villages of the short crop sections had few or no institutions. He showed, furthermore, that the total cash value of the funds received from the Central Government was less than half of what the A.R.A. itself had paid out to Russian employees whom it was originally expected the government would pay. A careful computation had been made of the expenses of one year's operation in the Kazan district. This showed that all contributions from local sources, including the transportation of products by the peasants

<sup>6</sup> *Pravda*, January 3, 1923.

themselves, amounted to approximately nine per cent of the value of the relief extended. It was estimated that excluding the transportation costs, which were unusually heavy in this district and would have been borne anyway, regardless of whether the food was supplied by the Russian Government or by the A.R.A., the local contributions to the A.R.A. operation in this district amounted to three per cent of the value of the relief. The total expenses of the maintenance of the A.R.A. organization in Simbirsk district during December amounted to two and one-third per cent of the value of relief products delivered during that month. How, Quinn demanded, could the Posledgol justify the charge that the cost of distribution of A.R.A. products was out of proportion to their value? Weller, the secretary of the Posledgol, triumphantly offered to demonstrate. He had, so he explained, carefully computed the expenses in the Samara district, which amounted to thirty per cent of the value of the products. This conclusively proved the unjustifiable expense forced on the government by the A.R.A. Weller was asked to produce his figures. An examination showed that a decimal point had slipped, and instead of thirty per cent the real figure was three per cent, which corresponded to the estimates of the Americans. Weller was momentarily chagrined, but it was too late to make amends. The Posledgol had already passed and published its resolution on the strength of the thirty per cent figure, and besides it required more than decimal points to change the Posledgol's attitude in this matter.<sup>7</sup>

Failing to make headway with statistical demonstrations, Quinn cabled the substance of all these matters to America on January 6, and asked if the A.R.A. was prepared to waive some of its rights under the Riga Agreement in order to prevent the threatened stalemate. The Directors went over the issues with Haskell, then in America,<sup>8</sup> and decided to authorize Quinn to

<sup>7</sup>A statement from the Posledgol, apparently referring to the A.R.A., announced that relief agreements with certain organizations had been conditionally protracted, but all must be revised as they had been entered into by the Soviet Government under the stress of famine.

<sup>8</sup>Haskell had been appointed High Commissioner for Greece by the American Red Cross which was caring for refugees there. Accompanied by several A.R.A. men recently in Russia, Haskell left for Athens shortly after this conference. During Haskell's absences from Moscow and Athens, Quinn remained in charge in the former, and Colonel E. L. Daley in the latter city.



meet the demands of the Soviet Government. It was recognized at this time that as the need diminished, pressure on the A.R.A. would increase, and that for the sake of completing the program, further concessions might have to be made. Hoover set forth these concessions in a telegram January 8, 1923:

"Assuming we are not operating open kitchens in competition with closed Soviet institutions for children, we cannot understand motives behind request that we eliminate open kitchens in famine area. Long experience has proved beyond question that dry ration distribution is totally ineffective where relief to children is really intended.

"Realizing that areas we are feeding are poorest financially and least able to bear burden now wished upon them by Central Government and providing Central authorities agree Riga Agreement remains full force and accept responsibilities thereunder, you are authorized offer assist these local governments by meeting their ruble expenses of A.R.A. district administration, including salaries office personnel, A.R.A. inspectors, or others engaged directly A.R.A. functions. This not to include kitchen, warehouse or distribution transportation personnel.

"Under same conditions we are also prepared pay similar Russian personnel engaged A.R.A. administrative functions in Moscow headquarters.

"The above does not affect nor is it intended to alter the Riga agreement, which must continue to stand as our charter. It is nothing more than a liberal interpretation of minor clauses to meet changing conditions as we enter the liquidation period of A.R.A. efforts."

As this cable was sent in code to Riga and from there by courier to Moscow, it did not reach Quinn until January 16. In the meantime, the situation had reached the point where suspension of the A.R.A. operation actually threatened. The feeding was not seriously interrupted, but the movement of the A.R.A. relief freights, and hence expansion, had ceased. Telegrams from the districts asking for instructions came in a shower. Kiev reported that it could get no cars to make shipments to subdistrict warehouses, and that it could move nothing by motor trucks, because the local officials could not supply

gasoline. Minsk wired that sixteen cars of food were in the yards, but the railway would not release them until the freight was paid, and the local government had no money. In Petrograd, the only A.R.A. warehouse was closed and sealed because the government representative could not raise the money to pay another department of the government for its use. Renshaw, the District Supervisor, saw his kitchens coming to the end of their stocks, while he was helpless to replenish them with food in the warehouse a few blocks away. Gregg at Saratov wired: "Railway refuses ship or discharge freights without payment. Medical and food shipments now held up more than week." Likewise Ufa: "Local Government representative stranded and . . . twenty-five cars child feeding [stocks] standing on tracks, Ufa has no local funds available to cover freight, and demurrage charges increasing twenty billion [roubles] weekly and local railroad director non-coöperative. . . ." The same reports came from Kazan and other places, indicating that the whole relief machine, like a motor with a clogged gas connection, was running explosively, irregularly, and would soon run not at all. Quinn had no choice but to notify the government of these facts, and the inevitable consequences. This he did in a letter to Lander on January 15, 1923:

"To-day is the fifteenth of the month and so far we have received no funds from your government to apply on our January budget, to say nothing of the twenty thousand (20,000)—1923—rubles <sup>9</sup> still due on the December budget.

<sup>9</sup> One "1923" ruble was the equivalent of 10,000 "1922" rubles or 1,000,000 rubles of any earlier vintage. In spite of the Communists' antipathy to the monetary system and their hope to shed it along with the other scales of Capitalism, the depreciation of the ruble made the manufacture of money tokens unique in the period of military Communism, since it increased rather than diminished in plant and output. By 1921 there were plants at Moscow, Penza, Perm, and Rostov/Don and the number of employees had risen from 11,260 in January, 1920, to 17,361 in October, 1921. Even so, production could not keep pace with depreciation and there was a shortage of money in circulation. There were other complications. The money factories consumed huge amounts of paper and pulp which might be used as profitably for other purposes. The ruble had so depreciated that by the end of 1921 the sum of \$3,000 in rubles of 50,000 or 100,000 denominations weighed from forty to eighty pounds and could be carried only in a sack. Early in 1922, the Soviet Government issued a new token, the Deneschni Snak, and decreed this new 1922 ruble worth 10,000 of its predecessors. But the process of depreciation went on relentlessly, forcing the government to issue a new ruble in 1923 the

"The conference with Mr. Kamenev, which I requested on January 5th, to clear up the question of the financial support of the A.R.A., has not yet taken place, though we were definitely assured that it would be held on January 9th.

"We are therefore left in the impossible position of being without funds and unable to obtain even an interview with the members of your government who are competent to adjust the matter. Meanwhile our districts advise us that unless they receive funds immediately, they will have to discontinue feeding. Salaries are due to-day and they have no funds to meet them. As a matter of fact, practically all food and medical shipments have ceased because of the railways' refusal to ship or discharge freight without payment in advance.

"I therefore beg to confirm my telephonic advice to you on Saturday that unless something is done before this evening to adjust, even temporarily, the situation, we will be reluctantly forced to advise our districts to carry on as long as funds in hand will permit and then close down their feeding operations until the matter is adjusted with your government.

"This is not a threat or an ultimatum. We want to avoid, if possible, the interruption of our feeding program. There is, however, no other course open to us in the circumstances."

Nothing happened until Wednesday, when Quinn again telephoned that the telegrams were going out. A few minutes later, Lander appeared at Quinn's office with his portfolio, in which he had eighty billion rubles, all that he had been able to scrape together in his office. This was not enough, but he promised to get more, and the telegrams were not sent.

Lander's position was difficult and unpleasant. He labored assiduously to keep the relief snarls disentangled. He saw the value of the American aid, and tried to facilitate it. He was, however, continually pressed by members of the party to make demands upon the A.R.A. which he knew could not be granted.

The delayed interview with Kamenev occurred after the arrival of Hoover's cable authorizing concessions. With this in hand, Quinn was able to reach an agreement with Kamenev on the whole question of relief finances. The Central Government was to provide for the local expenditures which pro-equivalent of 1,000,000 pre-1922 rubles. This device saved much paper, made bookkeeping less astronomical, and sharpened the wits of the lucky possessors of the vanishing tokens. Katzenellenbaum, *op. cit.*, 58, note.



vincial officials had been unable to meet, while the A.R.A., on its part, was to pay certain salaries to Russians in A.R.A. employ which had previously been borne by the government. Quinn set out the understanding in a letter to Kamenev, January 17:

"I beg to confirm our conversation of this afternoon, in which we covered the points raised in your letter of January 2nd and in which the following understanding was arrived at:

"First: The sum of nine hundred and thirty-seven thousand, two hundred and twelve (937,212) rubles, 1923, will be immediately placed at our disposal, to cover our requirements for the month of January.

"Second: A like sum will be placed at our disposal before February 1st, to cover our expenditures during February and as an advance against future requirements.

"Third: Effective February 1st, the A.R.A. agrees to assume the payment of salaries of certain groups of employees, including inspectors and administrative personnel of district headquarters engaged in directly A.R.A. functions, but not including those employed in kitchens, warehouses, transportation, or in work directly connected with the distribution of foodstuffs. At the same time, we agree to assume the payment of the salaries of the Russian personnel engaged in A.R.A. administrative work in Moscow headquarters.

"Fourth: We will present, monthly, to Mr. Lander, our detailed budget of funds required from the Central Government, on the basis of which they will be furnished us by the Central Government monthly in advance.

"Fifth: Necessary funds will be entirely supplied by the Central Government who will, themselves, arrange for reimbursement from the local governments concerned.

"As pointed out to you, the above does not affect, nor is it intended to alter, in any way, the "Riga Agreement", which must continue to stand as our charter, and which it is understood remains in full force, with the Central Government accepting all the responsibilities thereunder. It is nothing more than a liberal interpretation of minor clauses, to meet the changing conditions as we enter the liquidation period of the A.R.A.'s efforts.

"I will be grateful for an early reply confirming your understanding and agreement with the above."

On the strength of this conference with Kamenev, Quinn was able to cable New York that the skies were considerably brighter and that he anticipated no further difficulties. This

optimism proved to be a bit premature, for the funds that were promised to meet the indebtedness that had already been incurred were not delivered. Quinn, on January 28, wrote to Kamenev again to remind him that nearly two weeks had passed since the conference of January 17, without any confirmation by Kamenev of the understanding reached then, without the full budget for January being paid, and without any signs of the budget for February being supplied. He also referred again to the railway situation:

"At our conference your attention was also called to the situation which had arisen, owing to the instructions issued by the Commissariat of Railways that A.R.A. freights were not to be handled unless paid for. This practically brought our work in the districts to a standstill in the first two weeks in January, and our prospective increases in our program have not been possible on account of our inability to make shipments of supplies. This matter was regulated some days ago by a telegram from the Commissariat of Railways to all districts, but *only to the first of February*. If word is not sent out at once that A.R.A. freights are to be handled without payment, another difficult situation will arise which will not only hamper further increases in our program, but in some districts will even jeopardize its continuity."

Kamenev's reply came on February 3, confirming the understanding and promising immediate action in the delivery of funds. In explanation of the delay he wrote:

"I have pleasure in acknowledging receipt of your letter, dated January 17th, which, unfortunately, I received very late and which is the cause of the delay in my reply. The persons responsible for delaying delivery of your letter have been subjected to disciplinary punishment."

He explained further that the appropriation had passed through the Council of Peoples Commissars and after that through a number of commissions and conferences in various departments, and that this necessarily caused delay. This letter officially ended the crisis, and greatly relieved the worries and burdens of the men in the districts. The financial troubles

were by no means ended by this arrangement, and up to the very time that the A.R.A. left Russia there were occasional reports from one district or another that the operations were halted in this or that region because funds necessary to carry on could not be raised. These, however, were only temporary delays and the feeding marched on. The arrangement with the railways was never wholly satisfactory, but at no time was the whole movement of supplies again held up. The costly effect of this tieup was that it retarded the development of the A.R.A. program one month.

### OBSTACLES TO EXPANSION

Although the freight stoppage and other matters slowed down the operations, the feeding charts by February showed 1,313,027 children in kitchens and institutions. There were fair prospects that the tempo of expansion could be quickened during the succeeding months. At the end of January, a re-assessment of resources enabled the directors of the A.R.A. to cable Quinn on January 27, that there were sufficient funds in sight to permit the program being expanded beyond three million should the situation demand it. Quinn, thereupon, had a new survey of requirements in all the districts. The survey yielded interesting results. The men in the field, who in October and November were apprehensive about the winter, fearing a return of famine conditions on an acute though less extensive scale, had discovered when January came that their expectations were too pessimistic. In fact, contrary to the experience of the preceding year, each month as the winter wore on showed new optimism concerning the ability of the villages of the short crop areas to pull through to the harvest. Quinn was able, therefore, to write on February 1, "we have gone over the whole situation and reports from our districts and feel that the program of three million will cover the actual starvation among the children."

The particularly interesting development at this time was the difficulty experienced in pushing the feeding up to the authorized three million. The pressure on the A.R.A. to close its open kitchens was continuous, but in the early weeks of the



year there began to be a new kind of pressure for the complete discontinuance of the feeding then going on. For example, the A.R.A. was told that because these districts were not recognized as famine stricken, it should discontinue its operations in the gubernias of Podolia, Volhynia, Kiev, and Chernigov, where it was working largely through institutions. The A.R.A. Moscow headquarters did not see the situation in the same light. The feeding, being eighty per cent in institutions, was reaching primarily the youthful refugees from the famine who had been gathered from the streets and were of course helpless. Moreover, the officials of the institutions were insistent that the support be continued, and the political authorities of the gubernias, being in a better financial situation than other provincial governments, were perfectly willing to meet the necessary expenses for maintenance. This, however, Moscow ordered them not to do. A little later Lander's office suggested that if the A.R.A. wished to continue to help these particular institutions, it could turn its supplies over to the Ukrainian Red Cross, but it was still insisted that the American personnel be withdrawn. It subsequently developed that one reason for this request was the desire to move the Americans from what was described as an advanced military zone. There were no visible military operations at that time, nor later, but that was the explanation given.

Another case was the Kuban-Black Sea area, from which the A.R.A. prepared to withdraw, on being notified by Lander's office that the local officials and the population no longer desired American help. As soon as the people of this region learned of the decision, they protested loudly and bitterly, urging that the decision be reconsidered.

There were some cases where the A.R.A. was asked to withdraw, which proved to be transparent attempts to get control of the American products. Such was the case of Bugulma, a rather remote uyezd in the Simbirsk District. Supplies had been sent there during the winter to protect the uyezd for several months. As soon as they had been warehoused, the local officials drew up a protocol, announcing that the uyezd could no longer afford the American kitchens and would like to have the organization withdrawn. An American immediately went there

to find out what was the trouble. A few hours convinced him that the wish to have the A.R.A. withdraw was not shared by the general population. The officials, however, were firm, until he prepared to move the supplies from this uyezd to another. Hastily, they called a meeting. Resolutions rescinding the previous resolutions passed with unwonted speed. The supplies were not moved.

All these troubles during the expansion period are significant chiefly because they proved that any general extension of mass relief, such as was being urged in America at exactly this time by the various groups discussed in the preceding chapter, was out of the question. The food situation did not justify it, and the lessening of the need brought out again all the hostility of certain officials to middle class relief. In limited areas the need was still great, but no large program of relief was possible for it was contrary to Soviet policy. The experiences of the A.R.A. in opening new districts or reopening some that had been closed after the harvest are worth telling in detail, since they reveal both the attitude of the government and the changed food conditions.

#### EXPANSION IN ORENBURG, ASTRAKHAN, AND DAGHESTAN

The first area in which the relief was resumed was Orenburg, from which the A.R.A. had withdrawn, in agreement with the Central and local government, on the preceding October 1. The original operations in Orenburg had been marked by consistent obstruction on the part of local relief officials, but shortly after the withdrawal, they began to request through Lander's office that relief be resumed.<sup>10</sup> The requests were passed on to the A.R.A., and, in view of the difficulties of the preceding year, the A.R.A. headquarters informed Lander that the district could be reestablished only if the officials of Orenburg would make a definite agreement to give reasonable coöperation, and not to repeat the tactics by which they had bedevilled the Americans in 1922. The president of the Oren-

<sup>10</sup> Some months later, members of the A.R.A. were told that this change of heart was largely due to the desire of the local relief official to prove that his influence was such that he could have relief discontinued or resumed at his will.

burg Gubispolkom, another representative of the gubernia, who was also a member of the All Russian Central Executive Committee, and Rudminsky, the local Plenipotentiary Representative, signed the stipulated agreement, which was merely a specific promise on their part to observe the terms of the Riga Agreement. On its part, the A.R.A. agreed to resume feeding with an initial allocation for 100,000 children, to be increased if the need warranted. On January 16, 1923, Hartridge, who had been appointed District Supervisor, left for Orenburg. Before leaving Moscow, he had been assured by Lander that on his arrival he would find everything ready for him, offices, warehouses, and living quarters, as the Orenburg officials had been warned of his coming. But on his arrival on January 19, Hartridge learned that no arrangements whatever had been made. This was the beginning of what turned out to be a repetition of the unsatisfactory experience of the previous year. Gallagher, of the Catholic Mission, which had undertaken feeding in Orenburg on the basis of the same requests and understanding as the A.R.A., received the same treatment. The special Orenburg agreement, instead of providing for the observance of the Riga guarantees, constituted merely another scrap of paper to be ignored. The details of this affair may be omitted. It is sufficient to note that in spite of the difficulties the A.R.A. carried out a program which began with 13,920 in March and reached 200,165 in June.

Of greater interest is the remarkable change in food conditions which the Americans noted. Hartridge had been a member of the Orenburg staff the year before and was in a position to note the extent and the significance of the changes that had taken place there. Consequently, his testimony is of special value. "The present conditions in this district are in no way comparable to those existing in 1921-1922. The improvement has been tremendous and for one who, like myself, saw the horrors of the last year, it is difficult to realize the conditions of to-day. In Orenburg and the adjacent territory for a distance of fifty versts there is no famine. Food here is plentiful and cheap and there is no one without bread. . . . The number of children in closed institutions is greatly reduced. . . .



The Government is supplying homes and hospitals with more food than in the past, and with a greater degree of regularity. . . . Taken by and large, the improvement in all particulars has been so great and of such a nature as to appear almost incredible to any one who knew Orenburg a year ago." <sup>11</sup>

A somewhat similar experience attended the reopening of the Astrakhan Gubernia, and the Kalmuck region, which lie on either side of the Volga at its mouth. The A.R.A. operations had been carried on in these territories during the preceding year as a part of the Tzaritzin District, but on October 1, the A.R.A. organization in Astrakhan and the Kalmuck Oblast was liquidated, and the feeding taken over by the Swiss Red Cross Mission, working under the Nansen agreement, which had arranged to carry 24,000 children and 25,000 adults through the winter. In April, 1923, the Central Government, through Lander's office, asked the A.R.A. to return to these regions. As conditions at the mouth of the Volga were represented as being as bad as or worse than anything in Russia, and the A.R.A. was still delayed in its program elsewhere, Haskell agreed to Lander's request. Parker, of the Saratov District, started for Astrakhan, followed by a train with forty thousand rations. He found the Swiss Mission still carrying on, after a winter of altercation with the local government. The arrival of the American food was seized upon instantly by the Swiss as an indication that they were no longer needed, and they prepared to close their kitchens and pull out. As a parting shot to the Swiss, the government representatives suddenly discharged all their employees before the work of liquidation was completed. From the authorities Parker could get no attention. They were completely indifferent, and were obstinately unwilling to give him the necessary warehouses, transportation and so forth, which he required to distribute his supplies. One explanation of their attitude was the marked improvement of conditions in the city of Astrakhan, where the institutions were unusually well managed and fairly well supplied with food. Parker's impression was that if the A.R.A.

<sup>11</sup> For further information relative to Orenburg, see L'Engle Hartridge, "En Route to Orenburg," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, No. XXXIX, 28-29.

had not come, the government would have managed reasonably well without it. Why, under these circumstances, it asked the A.R.A. to come, remains a mystery.

In the Kalmuck Oblast <sup>12</sup> there were other difficulties. The Kalmucks, a nomad people, who had previously lived from the herds they owned, had few permanent villages, and few places where any considerable number could be fed in established kitchens. Their government had no funds, no means of transport, and practically no information as to where and how much was the need of assistance. To make matters worse, the Plenipotentiary Representative in Astrakhan tried to prevent Parker from getting information directly from the head of the Kalmuck Government. Relief was delayed, but after some six weeks Parker was able to get the distribution to the Kalmuck steppes well under way. The operation in Astrakhan itself was carried on under unsatisfactory conditions from the first of May to the end of June.

The most interesting and, from the point of view of good feeling, the most successful extension was in the Republic of Daghestan, situated in the North Caucasus along the Caspian Sea. News of suffering in Daghestan had reached Moscow during the summer of 1922, but the demands of more accessible and more populous areas had prevented anything being done for the mountaineers of this rugged country. In the spring of 1923, the appeals for help were renewed, and the A.R.A. sent Dr. Golder to investigate.<sup>13</sup>

The Daghestan officials and people gave him a great welcome, as a representative of a country of which they had heard extravagant tales, but of whose inhabitants they had seen very few samples. He came, Golder learned, from a land where the people, living as they did on the under side of the earth, were obliged to walk upside down, and where the oxen in the fields bore lanterns on their horns. He had come to Daghestan, presumably, by the only route from America, a hole through the earth, owned by the Czar in Moscow. An official accompanied Golder on his tour of inspection; but the distinguished

<sup>12</sup> Area about 38,000 square miles; population 126,000. The territory, a region of sand and steppe lies between the Volga, the Don, and the Caspian.

<sup>13</sup> F. A. Golder, "The Famine in Daghestan," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, No. XLI, 17-21.

visitor was particularly in the charge of a one-eyed bandit, famous in his profession throughout the land.

Daghestan has an area of some three million dessiatines, of which only two hundred and fifty thousand are cultivated, and of this available land less than one-third was planted in 1921. In this wild mountainous country the hardy people live precariously even when there is no famine. The villages perched on the sides of the mountains produce but little, and, even in the best years, the harvest provided food enough for only three months' consumption, while in 1921 it provided less than enough for two months. In normal times the deficit was supplied by import from the neighboring regions of Kuban and Stavropol to the north, but in the hard times following the war and the revolution, neither Daghestan nor its neighbors had had anything to exchange. The real government of the country is primitive, but like all Russia the land had its bloody combats between Reds and Whites, and now the Communists are nominally supreme. According to the local people, there are thirty-four different dialects spoken in this country with only a million population. Orders and proclamations from the headquarters of the Daghestan Government go forth in six different languages to the chief villages, where the necessary translation into other dialects is made.

Golder was convinced that this country, which probably needed help under the most favorable circumstances, surely needed it at this time and he, therefore, recommended that rations for ten thousand children and a generous allotment of hospital and medical supplies be sent. Orders immediately went to the A.R.A. Rostov District, and Driscoll, with the rations and a supply of clothing, soap, and two cars of medicines and hospital equipment, set forth for Petrovsk, where he arrived on March 4, 1923. It was obvious to Golder and Driscoll that in this country the usual A.R.A. method of distribution was physically impossible. The Daghestan officials made a special agreement in which they undertook to distribute the supplies strictly according to A.R.A. methods, and this agreement was published in the *Red Daghestan*, so that all the people of the country might understand the conditions under which the gift was made. Both Golder and Driscoll



were favorably impressed with the honesty and sincerity of the officials whom they met. Of particular ability was the head of the local relief organization, who was, according to Driscoll, "a red-hot Communist, a zealot, not a grafter," which he appeared to regard as an important distinction. The people and the officials of Daghestan were extremely grateful for the help that had come from so far away, and they showed their appreciation not only by word, but by a scrupulously honest execution of the agreement that they had made. The supplies delivered in Daghestan were sufficient to support 10,000 children until after the harvest.

### RELATIONS WITH THE LABOR UNIONS

The period under discussion (September, 1922-March, 1923) was also marked by intermittent argument, concerning the relation of the A.R.A. to the Trade Unions, which reached a climax when on January 30, 1923, Lander informed the A.R.A. that it would be required to make a collective agreement with the professional unions,<sup>14</sup> such as was required of commercial undertakings. Quinn handled the situation with skill, and his reply to Lander (January 31, 1923), declining to conclude the agreement, is so complete that it warrants quotation:

"(1) The A.R.A. work in Russia is of purely temporary and emergency character. We have already completed sixteen months of work without having entered into such an agreement, and as our relations with our employees have, we believe, been satisfactory both to them and to your Government, it seems useless to raise this question for the remaining period of our activity in Russia.

"(2) We have been informed by your office that a collective agreement contains certain provisions regarding the selection, employment, and discharge of personnel. We understand that this is an important part of such an agreement. Under the terms of the Riga Agreement, which is the sole basis of our operation in Russia, we are guaranteed certain rights in connection with freedom in choice, selection, and discharge of personnel. Obviously, we cannot enter into any agreement

<sup>14</sup> "Professional union" is in more common use in Russia than "trade union" but the meaning is the same.

which in any way contravenes or infringes upon this special agreement.

"(3) A large proportion of our employees, on account of the temporary character of our work, are not members of the Professional Unions, so that any agreement with the Professional Unions would not include all our employees.

"(4) Your Government has stated that it desires all our dealings with institutions of the Government to pass through the medium of the Representative Plenipotentiary. This covers the question of our relations with Professional Unions, as well as with other Government institutions.

"(5) We understand the employees' committee to be an integral part of the collective agreement and, as we cannot see our way clear to enter into such an agreement, we, obviously, cannot officially recognize the employees' committee.

"As stated to you, the American Relief Administration is perfectly willing to abide by the labor laws of your Government, insofar as they do not infringe special rights guaranteed us. We stated to you in our last conversation that if you would write us, officially setting forth the laws which you desired that we recognize, we would reply officially, agreeing thereto insofar as they would not contravene our rights as provided under special agreement.

"Furthermore, both to avoid misunderstanding and friction and in view of your Government's request that our relations with Government institutions pass through your hands, we would request that if the Professional Unions and the Employees' Committee have any question to take up, they should take them up through the medium of your office.

"We are anxious to have this question regulated and would appreciate very much receiving from you at an early date the official communication from you referred to in paragraph two above."

There was no answer to Quinn's argument. The A.R.A. employees had made no complaint, nor had the government. The latter had insisted that all dealings with Russian organizations, official or otherwise, be through the Plenipotentiary, and the fact that the unions preferred to make demands on the A.R.A., instead of on their government, was an insufficient reason for an exception in this case. Lander recognized this, and finally

worked out an arrangement with the unions which put an end to threats of strikes.

### THE MAIL SEIZURES AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES

The terms of the Riga Agreement gave to the A.R.A. the privilege usually accorded to diplomatic missions of sending across the Russian border sealed pouches containing the official communications of the organization and the personal mail of its members. On its part for this privilege, the A.R.A. agreed that its members should not utilize the official pouches for the evasion of any of the customs regulations of the country. During the autumn of 1922, there was some discussion between the Soviet Government and the A.R.A. as to the weight of the pouches which the couriers should be allowed to carry. The courier who left Moscow on November 27, carrying with him four official pouches, was accompanied by two A.R.A. men with four trunks. On their arrival at the frontier town of Sebesch they were held up by the customs officials, who declared that the pouches were overweight, and subsequently claimed that an attempt had been made to pass the trunks through as part of the official luggage, the trunks being sealed with the lead seals used on the A.R.A. warehouses, railroad cars, food packages, and for other similar purposes. The customs officials took charge of the courier pouches and the four trunks, and returned them to Moscow. When Quinn took up the matter with Lander, the latter replied that the custom officials believed that the pouches and the trunks contained articles which were dutiable, and asked the privilege of having the parcels opened and their contents inspected. In accordance with the offer that had previously been made to allow inspection of the pouches whenever the government desired, Quinn promptly granted Lander's request and the trunks and pouches were thereupon opened in the presence of representatives of Lander's office and the A.R.A.

It appeared that the suspicions of the customs officials were well founded. The trunks did contain articles of value, which the two Americans concerned had purchased in the course of



their residence in Russia. In reality the value of these articles was not large, but they were unquestionably dutiable under Soviet law, the unauthorized use of A.R.A. seals for the purpose of avoiding the payment of duties was indefensible and a clear violation not only of the A.R.A. agreement with the Soviet Government, but of the A.R.A.'s own regulations. The pouches, bearing the official seal of the Administration contained, it was discovered, in addition to the official mail and personal letters, two small packages containing letters which Americans had accepted from Russian friends to send out of the country with their own mail. There were a few other parcels containing bits of peasant work, which were being sent out of Russia as Christmas gifts. Here again the A.R.A. could offer no defense, for the violation of the agreement was clear. On the basis of the investigation, Lander asked for the dismissal of eleven A.R.A. men and one representative of an affiliated organization. Investigation showed, however, that only five were really guilty of violation of the rules, and these five were immediately released by the A.R.A.

Lander, and the other members of the government with whom this incident was discussed, took a reasonable attitude and expressed their satisfaction at the action taken by the A.R.A. But the same reasonableness was not shown in all quarters. It was to be expected that the faction of the Communist party which had fought the A.R.A. from the beginning would not let this opportunity slip to deliver a good solid blow. The blow was an article in the *Izvestia*, December 16, 1922, under the title "How They Help." The article stated that the famine calamity had forced the Soviet power not only to use its own resources, but to accept the help of foreign organizations among which was the A.R.A. From the first days of their arrival, however, there were rumors that "the American personnel of the A.R.A. besides their immediate duties of aiding the famished, busied themselves in Moscow and in the districts with the purchasing of jewelry, furs, carpets, et cetera. These rumors, the article continued, "were confirmed when the diplomatic pouch of the organization was seized and discovered to contain gold and silver, diamonds, and likewise many articles representing museum curiosities, pic-

tures, gobelins, carpets, furs." The articles discovered in this pouch, it was said, were valued at several trillion roubles. "Thus," concluded *Izvestia*, "they are aiding the famished; thus the representatives of the 'civilized America' behave in the 'barbarian Russia,' thus the 'rich America' is using the 'poor Russia'." This outburst naturally raised a protest from the A.R.A., and six days later *Izvestia* published a communication from Lander, which described the incident more in accordance with the facts.

The articles found in the pouches were confiscated by the authorities and similarly the contents of the trunks, which contained, in addition to the contraband goods, personal belongings which the owners had brought into Russia. This was perhaps a legitimate procedure in these circumstances, but when the custom officials proposed that the A.R.A. pay a fine of 23,511.95 rubles in gold, that is nearly \$11,000, the suggestion was not favorably received, and the matter was not pushed by the government.

Subsequently, though the outgoing mail was inspected and sealed in the presence of a Soviet representative, the pouches were on two occasions seized at the border and returned to Moscow. No violation of agreement was found and the pouches were released after Lander intervened. On February 21 the incoming A.R.A. mail was seized, taken to the Soviet Foreign Office, read, and a good many personal letters placed in wrong envelopes. Though a violation of agreement, the incident was not very serious in itself, for the A.R.A. was engaged in no intrigues and Soviet spies in the A.R.A. offices would undoubtedly read the mail anyway. It did appear, however, that some officials were determined either to compromise the A.R.A. if possible, or provoke a situation that would compel the organization to give up the Riga Agreement or withdraw. Haskell immediately had interviews with Litvinov, Assistant Commissar of Foreign Affairs, Krassin, Commissar of Foreign Trade, Radek, Chief of the Propaganda Bureau, Rakovsky, head of the Ukrainian Government, all of whom declared that these incidents were the work of subordinates, for whom they apologized.

In these interviews and in subsequent conferences with

Kamenev and the officers of the Posledgol, Haskell presented a bill of particulars. He explained that the matters were not very serious, but they seemed to indicate that the Soviet Government, in spite of official statements to the contrary, would be glad to have the A.R.A. get out of the country. If this were the case, he asked that the Government say so frankly in order that the necessary arrangements for withdrawal might be made. Kamenev and the other officials reiterated their desire to have the A.R.A. remain and they immediately took steps to set right the matters about which Haskell had complained.

Both Kamenev and Kalenin agreed that the program of the A.R.A. was ample to meet the situation then existing and from neither, nor from any other official, was the suggestion made that there be further expansion. The substance of this Haskell cabled to America.

These conferences, like those of the year before, did much to clear the atmosphere. As at that time when matters became so jammed that the continuation of the work was threatened, high officials were forced to take cognizance of the situation, to break the jam and curb the activities of their more obstreperous subordinates. In addition to this reassertion of authority by the Soviet leaders, there was another factor that promoted more pleasant relations during the concluding months of the Russian operations.

As has been noted, the favorite assertion of orthodox Communists to discredit and belittle American relief work was that it was merely camouflaged economic espionage, or political intrigue. Lacking evidence of political activity, the Communist propagandists during 1922 had emphasized the secret economic objectives of the A.R.A. American capitalists had dark designs on the natural resources of Russia, and the furnishing of food and medicines was the first sly move in the campaign to rob the Russians of their wealth. But by 1923 much water had flowed under the bridge. Two years of the New Economic Policy had pretty well demonstrated that, contrary to early theories, the new State Capitalism required capital. The resources dissipated during the revolution and the period of military Communism had to be replaced. Russian industry could not pull itself out of the mire by its own boot straps.



The export of grain was not as profitable as had been expected. Potential concessionaires balked at the terms offered them. Mines and factories needed machinery; the textile factories needed raw materials. Credit was essential before Russia could hope to supply the peasants' demands or to produce for export. America had the most money to lend, and inevitably many Communist leaders began to look hopefully in that direction for a resumption of diplomatic intercourse which they hoped would facilitate economic relations. Thus during the last months of the work in Russia, certain Communists, completely reversing themselves, sought to give the A.R.A. men a new rôle. No longer were they spies seeking to discover Russia's riches for the profit of foreign capitalists and the impoverishment of peasants and workers; but they were reliable witnesses whose testimony of Russia's undeveloped wealth should convince foreigners with money to invest of the rich profits to be made once capitalist America came to terms with the Communist state.

#### SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS 1922-1923

In spite of all these obstacles and controversies, the A.R.A. carried through in this after famine year a program which met the situation and which, though not comparable with that of the preceding year, was extensive and varied. Special aspects of individual and medical relief are described in later chapters. Here we summarize merely the progress of feeding. From the peak figure of 4,173,339 children and 6,317,958 adults in August, 1922, there was a drop of two million in September and seven million in October as the adult feeding was demobilized and the children's kitchens reduced to a post famine basis. The low point for the year was reached in November, 1922, when the returns showed 743,453 children and 62,050 adults. The adults were the sick in institutions. Thereafter there was a steady rise, slow at first on account of the difficulties described, until 2,767,598 children and 142,227 adults were on the lists in June, 1923. At the time of withdrawal in June sufficient food had been distributed to feeding points and institutions to carry them on the program of approximately 3,000,000 until past the harvest.

## CHAPTER XVI

### LAST DAYS

#### THE BACKGROUND—1923

WHEN the sudden Russian spring came in 1923, there was no repetition of the ghastly famine scenes of the year before, except in a spot here or there in the Volga regions, in one or two places on the coast of the Black Sea, or in the lost villages of the Kirghiz steppes. Rather the peasants were continuing with renewed energy the activities begun the previous spring. Their primary needs, which took on added emphasis as the pressure of food shortage abated, were for horses, agricultural implements, clothing. There was still a refugee movement, but it was a continuation in increasing volume of that movement back towards the villages which had begun the moment American corn distribution began to develop. The refugees were still to be seen sitting in a jumble of rags and bundles in the bright spring sun on station platforms, but they were waiting not for trains to take them in search of bread, but for trains to carry them back to their villages.<sup>1</sup> This spring the peasants were not complaining of the failure of the government to give them bread. The grievance they most loudly proclaimed was the burden of a new taxation, an old song, which they sang with the zest and skill of long familiarity.

The new policy of the Communists toward the peasants, initiated in the spring of 1921, began to show real results in the peasant villages in the spring of 1923. From the position of encouraging the poorest elements of the villages to exercise their dictatorship over the middle and rich peasants, the

<sup>1</sup> The government at this time was doing its utmost to return the peasants to their villages. The children's commission of the Posledgol reported in *Izvestia*, May 20, 1923, that up to May 1, 24,498 children had been returned to the former famine gubernias, such as Simbirsk, Samara, Tzaritzin, that 30,276 more would be returned within a short time, and that between June and November, 32,000 more would be sent home.

Communists had made an about face, abandoning those whom they had formerly encouraged, dissolving the committees of the poor peasants as corrupt and as a liability to the country, and giving their support to the middle peasants, whom a few years ago they had feared and hated, because of their obstinate individualism. To encourage the importation of horses, the government offered the peasants a half-fare rate on the railroad to Siberia or Tashkent. The peasants who took advantage of this had to find money for the animals they bought, as well as for the fare, and this, of course, excluded the poorest peasants, who were as devoid of means as they had been before the revolution. In 1922, the government distributed its seed grain on a straight per capita basis to the peasants who had an insufficient supply. In 1923, it distributed the seed only to the peasants who could qualify by proving both that their supply was short, and, by witnesses, that they had the means and equipment to plant the seed and harvest the crop, which implied ability to repay the loan and the twenty-five per cent interest that the government charged. This requirement again bore heavily on the poor. This policy, which was certainly cold-blooded and was bitterly resented by the poor, the faithful allies of the Communists in the early days, did, of course, promote agricultural production. The cultivated area, which in 1916 was 79.2 million dessiatines, and had fallen in 1921 to 53.2, and in 1922 to 43.8, rose in 1923 to 59 million.<sup>2</sup>

But the peasants' chief obsession at this time was the new money taxes which the government began to collect in the late winter and spring. The tax in kind had, according to the peasants, been heavy, but they knew approximately what to expect and once having paid the tax, were relatively free from further interference on this account. The effect of the tax in kind on the price of grain, as a demonstration of its undesirability, has already been discussed. The new money taxes represented the beginning of a movement to shift all taxes from kind to money. On the peasants of the Volga the following new money taxes were laid this spring: A labor trans-

<sup>2</sup> B. Bakhmeteff, "Russia at the Crossroads," *Foreign Affairs*, March 15, 1924, 421-435. Based on official data.



port tax of 12 rubles (1923 variety) per working peasant, and 42 rubles per working horse; a house tax from 4 to 15 rubles, depending on the size of the house; a general citizen tax of about 10 rubles for every member of the family, regardless of age or sex; and a compulsory insurance, ranging from 9 rubles for a cow to 20 for a house, making the total of an average household of about 300 rubles per year.<sup>3</sup> In spite of the fact that Moscow determined what taxes should be levied and how they should be collected, there were many local differences, for the local officials interpreted the decrees from the center according to their own lights, which often were dim and flickering. The situation here described obtained in various parts of Samara gubernia, but in Kursk, the peasants described sixteen different kind of taxes of many original varieties. They complained of the manner of collection:

"You receive an order on February 20 stating that if you don't pay a tax by February 15 you will be fined. Whether you want to or not you begin to pay not only the tax but also the fine."

They declared:

"The peasant is like a sheep. Whoever needs wool, fleeces it. It was fleeced by the Czar, the landlords, Denikin's army, and the comrades. They ought to have pity on it, otherwise it will be skinned altogether and there will be no wool to fleece."<sup>4</sup>

Theoretically the tax did not appear to be extremely heavy, but the peasant found it so, for he could sell his grain for only about one-third of the pre-war price, and grain was the only commodity of value that he possessed. The money tax came at irregular intervals and the peasant must pay immediately, or be fined, which forced him to throw his grain on the market at any price he could get. While in the winter of 1921-1922

<sup>3</sup> These figures are from the reports of H. M. Fleming, whose inspection work in Samara and parts of Penza and Simbirsk gubernias brought him in contact with both local officials and peasants.

<sup>4</sup> J. Yakovlev, *Derevnia kak ona est*, 39-40. The writer was an investigator sent out by the Communist Party to discover what the peasants were thinking.

a few poods of rye would buy almost anything that a peasant possessed, by 1923, the price of grain had fallen so low that a horse, for instance, cost three or four times as much in terms of rye as under normal conditions.<sup>5</sup> The effect of this taxation on the villages was to draw the grain supply into the towns, where the market was overstocked and the price of grain continued to fall. It happened, therefore, that as far as its open kitchens were concerned, the A.R.A. was moving food from the towns to the country, while the government fiscal policy was drawing the food from where it was needed to the towns, where there was no market.

An American observer of the peasant struggles wrote: "A peasant without a horse is not a peasant. He is merely a burden upon the village in which he lives." This remark was inspired by the very remarkable efforts then being made to increase the number of horses. Immediately after the 1922 crop, new horses began to appear in the Samara gubernia. Some were brought in by the British and American Friends and by the Swedish Red Cross, but nine-tenths were bought by the peasants, who went to Siberia or to points along the Orenburg and Tashkent lines, where there were still horses to be sold. In a single uyezd of Samara gubernia with a population of 320,000, or about 52,000 families, not less than 20,000 permits were issued to peasants to go to Siberia or to the Kirghiz Republic for draft animals. By no means all these permits were used, but many were and there was an appreciable increase in the number of horses in the gubernia.

From the point of view of the A.R.A. policy, all these things were unmistakable signs that the time of emergency relief, i.e., the importation and distribution of food from abroad, had really ended, and had been required only because of the government's fiscal difficulties. Even those who held the most pessimistic opinions in the fall of 1922, attested to the changed situation. Thus Colonel Bell, whose district covered an enormous area in northeastern Russia, and who had antici-

<sup>5</sup> *Izvestia*, November 7, 1923, gave comparative prices in rye units; among them: A plow cost pre-war 30 rye units, in 1923—140 units. Salt pre-war, 14 units, 1923—248 units. Textiles, pre-war, 7.2 units, 1923—63 units. Sugar, pre-war—6 units, 1923—52 to 63 units. Cited by B. Bakhmeteff, "Russia at the Crossroads," *Foreign Affairs*, March 15, 1924, 422.

pated a very bad situation in many regions, wrote on May 7: "As reported previously, famine as real famine does not exist in this district at the present time, and deaths from such are not being officially reported . . . the real condition as we see it in this district is poverty, and it is a real menace for the reason that no class is exempt. Professional workers are the worst off, as the taxes placed upon them are so great as to prevent the possibility of earning sufficient for their bare needs of food and clothing, without considering the other necessities of life." Likewise, some of the foreign relief organizations that had believed continued mass relief was called for, attested to the new turn of affairs by adopting the policy of buying food in Russia within a short distance of the places where it was to be distributed as famine relief.

In the towns and cities two tendencies were apparent, which in spite of the improved food conditions made life still difficult. From the autumn of 1922 when the government began to economize in order to balance its budget, the sharp upward stroke in the curve of unemployment had continued. This became serious enough to receive the official attention of the Posledgol, and to be the cause of discussion in the papers. In Moscow in the spring, the employment bureau was so overcrowded for a time that it was forced to close its doors. In Petrograd and in the larger Ukrainian cities, there were the same troubles. Larin, one of the most prolific of the Communist economists, explained these developments in a passage in which he contrasted the unemployment in Russia with that in western Europe.<sup>6</sup> "In Russia, the unemployment occurs because of an increase in productiveness. There (in western Europe) it occurs when productivity is reduced. Russian unemployment is based on a plan. There on impulse." Larin's explanation did not put wages in the pockets of destitute workers. Whether by plan or by impulse, unemployment among people impoverished by war, revolution, and famine, produced very harrowing conditions in the towns.

As a matter of fact, the increase in unemployment was primarily due to three things. First, the closing of state operated plants that were running at great loss; second, the closing

<sup>6</sup> *Itogi, puti, vyvody novoï ékonomicheskoi politiki.*



of private and semi-private enterprises as a result of heavy taxes; third, the pruning of the Soviet bureaucracy.

The closing of private and semi-private enterprises did not contribute as largely to the unemployment situation as that of state plants, but it was an important symptom of the times. These privately managed enterprises were conducted on a much smaller scale with fewer employees than the state managed, but in spite of difficulties in the way of government favoritism for their rivals, were able to operate more economically and to capture a large slice of the market.<sup>7</sup> This success of private trade in competition with the state was the source of much distress to the government. Larin admitted that the trade link with the villages had during the two years of the N.E.P., "fallen completely, or nearly so, into the hands of the bourgeoisie." Zinoviev at the 12th Congress of the Party confessed: "Our trade does not seem to be getting on. The turnover of private operators grows enormously and such organizations as the trusts turn their goods over to private organizations to sell." The effect of this was bad, for the control of the Party began to slip. Larin pointed out with some alarm that instead of sixty per cent of the managers of state factories belonging to the laboring class, only thirty or thirty-eight per cent were of this class in 1923. "At the same time, the villages begin to be emancipated from the proletarian influence. . . . The political problem for 1923 must consist in consolidating the proletarian element in the villages and of driving the bourgeoisie from the positions they have seized." The heavy taxes served the double purpose of bringing in needed revenue and suppressing the private traders, whose competition was too strong for the nationalized concerns. There were failures and many small businesses flickered and went out like candles in rain. There were protests, and Odessa furnished a shopkeepers' strike, when all enterprises of the city not managed by the state closed their doors in protest against the high taxes. These closures affected employment indirectly more than

<sup>7</sup> For example in the Tartar Republic during 1922 fifty-five per cent of all sales were made by private enterprises, the state owned trusts securing thirty per cent and the coöperatives only nine per cent, the remainder being in the hands of miscellaneous organizations. These figures were secured by J. Rives Childs, from the official reports of the Tartar Soviet Republic.

directly, for they slowed down the commercial activity which had increased so encouragingly after the adoption of the N.E.P.

Government departments, which had been scandalously over-staffed, began to cut down when under the strict budget system they were required to live within their means. Great numbers of the intelligentsia suddenly found their security snatched from them. Economic depression left them no place to turn for work. Many slipped back into the practice of petty speculation, by which they had lived during the dark days of military Communism. Even in remote volosts the effect of the budgetary system was felt. In volost offices where formerly there were seven departments with seven department heads and several assistants, there were still seven departments, but one man was running them all, without any appreciable falling off in the public service.

The revival of the spirits of the bourgeoisie, concerning which the communists declaimed with so much bitterness, had under the N.E.P. undoubtedly taken place, but it is doubtful if it was such a menacing development as the Party orators sought to make it. One of the most encouraging developments of this year had been the return to the service of the nation of many whose technical training was badly needed, but who through hostility to the Communists, or because of oppression and fear, had kept aloof from public activity. There was noticeable throughout Russia during this year a growth of a spirit of compromise between the non-communists and the Party organization. This development became sufficiently marked to become a subject of acrimonious debate at the 12th Party Congress in April. When Krassin put forward a suggestion that non-party experts be given greater responsibilities in industry, Zinoviev and others bitterly attacked him, with the result that the policy of the Party as announced was that control should not be allowed to pass out of the hands of approved Communists into the hands of specialists, no matter how well qualified. From the point of view of Party politics, this was perhaps sound, but for the good of industry and of Russia, it was not. Time had not yet healed the ugly festering wounds of the past years. Many still hated the Communists with a searing corrosive passion; many Communists

still feared these remembering enemies and dreaded their emergence from the shadow of terror.

### THE FRUITS OF THE A.R.A.'S NEW POLICY

The A.R.A.'s policy of concentrating whenever possible on existing institutions, in distinction to open kitchens, in the winter of 1922-23, was an attempt, in agreement with the Soviet Government, to meet the changed conditions and a preparation for the A.R.A.'s inevitable withdrawal. The desired results began to show in the spring. It had taken some time for both the A.R.A. men in the field and the managers of the institutions to work out a method of procedure which would satisfy the requirements of both parties. The methods were not the same throughout the country, but the principle of American control of American products was maintained, while the management of the institutions remained in the hands of the officials of state departments. The new policy approximated, as nearly as possible, that followed by the A.R.A. in the later days of its work in other countries. There national institutions, receiving state support, but independent of the government, and therefore out of politics, were set up to carry on work after the A.R.A. had gone, and were strengthened by advice and support.<sup>8</sup> An independent, non-political, child health organization was, of course, impossible in Russia, and so the aim here was to strengthen as many individual institutions as possible, so that they would be able to carry on with better standards than they had known during the days of famine and confusion. To coördinate this new policy, the Moscow headquarters established a new division, Inspection and Control, under men who had taken part in similar work in other countries.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The most successful of these national organizations established with the help of the A.R.A. were: In Austria, the "Amerikanisch-Oesterreichisches Kinderhilfswerk"; in Poland, the "Polsko-Amerykanski Komitet Pomocy Dzieciom"; in Czecho-Slovakia, the "Péce o Dítě." The work of these organizations is described in many A.R.A. Bulletins, particularly the second series, numbers V, VII, XI, XVI, XVIII, XIX, XXII, XXIV, XXVI, XXIX, XLIV. See also the published reports issued by the Czech, Austrian, and Polish Missions of the A.R.A.

<sup>9</sup> J. H. Hynes, formerly of the A.R.A. Austrian Mission, was chief of this Division until compelled to leave Russia on account of illness. P. S. Baldwin, formerly Chief of the Polish Mission, succeeded him.



During the preceding year the demands of the larger problem of distribution of food and medical supplies had given the Americans little time for institutional work. They could and did put pressure on the management to make such improvements in cleanliness and sanitation as the physical equipment permitted. Under the new plan, the districts set out to raise the standards of institutional management. A system of grading the institutions on the basis of what they were able to accomplish with the materials that were at their disposal had excellent results. The Americans did not, of course, attempt to pass on the methods of education, discipline, and the like, prescribed by the state departments. They concentrated on important externals. Cleanliness of the institutions, their kitchens, tables, sleeping quarters, baths, and so forth; the neatness of the children and attendants; the degree of compliance with the regulations of the A.R.A. as to accounting and the effective use of supplies; and the general degree of co-operation from all employees. Sabine, the Supervisor of the Moscow district, graded the institutions from "C" to "A plus." He warned "C" institutions that failure to improve would mean the discontinuance of American help. "B" institutions were regarded as fair, and were coaxed to show signs of improvement. "A" and "A plus" institutions received preference in the distribution of supplementary supplies, and the managers of the "A plus" homes received a certificate from the District Supervisor. In Minsk, where as in other provincial towns the physical properties were not so easy to obtain as in Moscow and Petrograd, a similar system of grading was used. In this particular city the grades were from "one" to "five plus." Willoughby, the District Supervisor, admitted that the institutions to which in Minsk he gave the grade of "five" or "five plus" would not have been better than "two" in Moscow or Petrograd, but he took into consideration the difficulty which the institutions had in securing even the most primitive equipment and to those which clearly succeeded in making the best of what they had, he gave the highest rating. For example a children's home, which kept itself clean, which improvised practically all of its cooking utensils and cups from American tin containers, and made tables, stools, chairs, and even plates

and spoons from wooden packing cases, deserved the highest rating. At first, the managers were inclined to regard the inspectors sent by the A.R.A. with suspicion and distrust, but gradually they began to see that the real purpose of the inspectors was not to find fault, but to suggest improvements. Before long there was an appreciable improvement in institutional management wherever the American aid was given, and soon "the American classification" became an important factor, both to the personnel of the institutions and the higher authorities. In one instance an able manager, discharged for reasons unknown, but which might well have been political, succeeded in recovering his position by backing his appeal for justice with his certificate of an "A plus" American rating. In Petrograd, the Department of Education, which controlled a great number of children's homes, formally requested the A.R.A. to report the institutions which were least satisfactorily managed. In coöperation with this Department, Renshaw, the District Supervisor, carried out a special clean-up campaign, and put the down-at-heel homes on a sound basis.

Throughout the length and breadth of Russia, the A.R.A. organization was engaged in almost every conceivable activity connected with the improvement of the health and treatment of children, and in the prevention of epidemics. Thus, in far away Stavropol in the North Caucasus, there was a completely equipped dental ambulatory, which gave free treatment to the children of that gubernia. In Melekes uyezd (Simbirsk), malarial swamps were drained. In Koshki, bridges were repaired. In Samara, an agricultural experiment station was rehabilitated, and with it a breeding farm for Kirghiz and Kalmuck horses. In Kazan city, a free venereal clinic and, on the banks of the Volga, a large sanatorium for tubercular children were opened. In Kiev, a hospital was renovated and equipped for the "children's city," the home of waifs. Outside Kiev, a rest home was equipped for teachers in the university who were ill and without funds. The Odessa District utilized the labor of a great number of refugees and unemployed to build a badly needed road from Odessa to Nikolaiev, a distance of a hundred and twenty versts.

The weeks that followed the successful February Confer-

ences undoubtedly saw the best relations between the A.R.A. and the officials. The suspicion of American motives had been dispelled; the program was not so large as to require constant pressure from the Americans on the officials. The distributive machinery was running smoothly, and the efforts of the Posledgol to curtail the privileges of the A.R.A. had abated. Mme. Kameneva, however, had not suffered a change of heart toward the foreigners, for she declared at a meeting in April that foreign relief, as a matter of fact, was just a subterfuge for getting into Russia and getting rid of a surplus of food. It was obvious, she pointed out, that if foreigners really wanted to help Russia, they would buy their supplies in Russia, and not bring them from abroad. She neglected to say that the government had specifically asked the foreigners to bring food, and that, in any case, it would have been difficult to find in Russia preserved milk, cocoa, and rice for undernourished children, and equipment and medicines for destitute hospitals.

This almost unrippled calm was rudely and seriously disturbed only once during the concluding months. On May 5 word came to Moscow that the Soviet Relief Plenipotentiary at Ekaterinoslav had arrested a member of the American staff, and was preparing to send him to Kharkov under guard. Murphy, the American, was innocent and the arrest violated both the Riga and Ukrainian agreements, as well as a special immunity guarantee signed by Kamenev attached to the identity cards of all A.R.A. men. Harrington, the District Supervisor, acted quickly and with good sense, and Burland, who was acting Director in the absence of Haskell and Quinn, got immediate satisfaction from Lander, who promptly ordered the removal of the offending Plenipotentiary and the release of Murphy. He then officially apologized, and the incident passed without becoming a subject of controversy in the Russian or foreign press.

#### INDIVIDUAL RELIEF

During these spring months, in addition to all its varied activities, the A.R.A. carried on through the Food Remittance



Division an ambitious program of aid to specific individuals.<sup>10</sup> The technique of mass relief, evolved from long experience, precluded the placing of emphasis on individuals. The major relief operation was concerned with the importation of food to cover the deficit of a nation, rather than to piece out the budget of an individual; it built its program to feed percentages of population of nations and provinces; it thought in terms of thousands, and tens of thousands, rather than of families and small groups. The famine situation had demanded this procedure, but there remained the problem of the individual who by force of circumstances could not be reached in this way. The food (and later clothing) packages of the Remittance Division offered an ideal means of individual relief. They had been used effectively in other countries; they proved equally effective in Russia; and as mass relief decreased, more attention could be given to this.

Moreover, the primitive struggle for existence during the revolutionary period had borne unequally on various classes of the population. The first to succumb were the very old, the very young, the weak and infirm. After them came those whose work was in the realm of the refinements rather than in the fundamentals of life—scholars, teachers, painters, sculptors, musicians, and after them the lawyers, doctors, engineers, and the specialists whose services were badly needed but who were distrusted and distrustful because of their bourgeois background and connections. Suspect of the new rulers, with nothing to offer for bread but the ebbing strength of hands unused to labor, these, the intelligentsia, received the blinding shock of the revolution. All were driven from their accustomed work, to fight for food and for sticks to make a fire. Many broke under the heavy burden. "Death was now more in evidence than life. Before my eyes there died Feodor Batiushkov, the famous professor of philology, poisoned from eating uneatably filthy cabbage. Another one to die from hunger was S. Bengerov, professor of history and literature, he who gave the Russian people entire editions of Shakespeare, of Schiller, and

<sup>10</sup> A detailed account of these activities is given by E. G. Burland in "The Intelligentsia: Some Aspects of 'General Relief' in Russia," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, No. XLI, 4-12. Also by J. R. Ellingston in "The Carriage of Philanthropy," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, No. XLIII, 106-135.

of Pushkin. I saw him quivering and limping about the bazaar, coveting an apple which his means could not provide him. I saw that talented critic, A. A. Ismailov, die of hunger. At the same period the philosopher, V. V. Rosanov, succumbed to starvation in Moscow. Before his death the latter roamed the streets in search of cigarette ends with which to appease his hunger. . . ."<sup>11</sup>

Another tells the same story in other words: "Some days ago Professor Khvostoff hanged himself. Yesterday Professor Inostrantseff took potassium cyanide. So dies a great philosopher and the first geologist of Russia. . . . Professor Rosenblatt has just put an end to his life. . . . Professors Rozin, Diakonoff, two Valkoffs, Vilieff, Kapustin, Pokrovsky, Batiushkoff, Kulishev, Ostrogorsky, Karpinsky, Arsenieff, one after another have died and others are dying. Dying from typhus, influenza, pneumonia, and cholera, from starvation and from all the seventy-seven plagues of Egypt. . . . Our faculty meetings are now little more than mournful memorials to our colleagues."<sup>12</sup>

To provide special funds for specific help to intellectuals, the A.R.A. turned to friends who had contributed to a similar cause in the past. The first aid came for Russian physicians; heroic men and women, standing bravely against the tide of typhus of the winter of 1922. In Samara Gubernia the incidence of typhus exanthematicus was six or eight per cent, but among physicians it was twenty-five or thirty per cent. A fund of \$67,500 was quickly raised<sup>13</sup> and was the means of saving the lives of many overworked, underfed, nerve-racked men.

In the spring of 1922, The Commonwealth Fund of New York, which had generously supported specific relief to the Central European intelligentsia through the A.R.A., offered to support a similar activity in Russia, if the A.R.A. could secure the same arrangements for distribution as in other countries.

<sup>11</sup> From a letter by one of the survivors. Quoted by J. R. Ellingston, *op. cit.*, 107.

<sup>12</sup> Pitirim Sorokin, *Leaves from a Russian Diary*, 230-231.

<sup>13</sup> The principal contributors were Wm. Bingham, 2nd, Bethel, Maine, \$35,000; The Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, \$25,000; the Rochester (N. Y.) Community Chest, \$5,000.

Negotiations to this end, begun by Burland on March 15, 1922, made little progress with Eiduk. Resumed negotiations with Kamenev were also fruitless, and in July they were abandoned. The rock on which this project came to grief was the right to decide who should receive the benefits of the relief. The A.R.A. felt compelled to insist that need alone should be the determining factor; a group in the Soviet Government demanded the right of absolute veto. This veto, the A.R.A. felt, might be used for political or personal ends, and could easily prevent the A.R.A. from fulfilling its obligation to the donors.

This setback did not stop the flow of individual relief. The A.R.A. used \$35,000 worth of unallocated remittances for the purpose. The packages were distributed, as the doctors' packages had been, without a new agreement but on the basis of the previous understanding. Other funds came in for this cause. Special groups in America, religious societies, musicians, actors, and others, gave to the support of similar groups in Russia, and by so doing saved for the new Russia the talents of men and women who were being crushed by the intolerable weight of life. Approximately \$400,000, representing about 2,340 tons of food supplies, was devoted to individual relief during the year 1922. The Soviet Government was aware of all this, and, while it would not officially sanction such relief, did not interfere with it.

It was during the early months of 1923 that individual relief reached the high point of its effectiveness. In December, 1922, The Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial gave \$230,000 with the understanding that it be used to assist the intelligentsia. This sum was handled without interference from the government, which had asked for and secured a gift of 800 food packages for distribution in the Moscow schools. Documentary evidence supported the assertions of the American distributors as to the splendid results of the work. The Memorial therefore, in February, 1923, made a new donation of \$600,000, of which \$75,000 was to supplement the original gift for unspecified groups, and \$525,000 to be distributed during March, April, and May among secondary teachers. The



"secondary teachers" were those employed in the technical and other schools preparing for the universities. This group was chosen first because of its need, and because it was small enough to be handled with the resources available. To carry out this program a new agreement was necessary. Happily the Soviet authorities did not raise the issues that had broken down the earlier negotiations, and an understanding was quickly reached. The distribution proceeded with only minor troubles, the Soviet Commissariat of Education and the Teachers' Professional Union coöperating with the A.R.A. During March, 14,000 food packages were distributed; during April, 10,000 food and 6,000 clothing; and in May, 7,500 food, and 10,000 clothing. In addition to the secondary teachers, many packages reached the "primary" teachers, to whom the Soviet authorities had asked that help be given.

To realize the importance of this work for Russian education, one must remember that the Soviet financial reforms of the autumn of 1922 drastically cut the budget of the Commissariat of Education and threw the burden of support of schools on localities which were poverty-stricken and indifferent. Such local funds as were available quickly vanished in the support of more material needs, and the peasants, steeped in tradition, were unwilling to support the schools where the ikons had been replaced by natural history charts, and the teaching of religion was forbidden by Soviet decree.

Lunacharsky, the Commissar of Education, raised his voice in vain against his slender appropriations. "I could torture you with terrible descriptions," he wrote. "Among the teachers there are dreadful conditions, beggarliness and pauperism, awful mortality and disease, suicide and prostitution. The teachers have only twelve per cent of the minimum income necessary to live."<sup>14</sup> The efforts of the teachers to keep their schools open, while they struggled to keep body and soul together, stands out even against a general background of tragedy. The letters from those who were helped were to

<sup>14</sup> *Izvestia* (No. 293), 1922, cited by Sorokin: *The Sociology of Revolution*, 345, Philadelphia, 1925. According to Lunacharsky (report to All Russian Congress of Soviets, October, 1924), there were, 1923, in Soviet territory 49,000 elementary schools with 3.7 million pupils, while in 1913 there were 62,000 such schools with 4.2 million pupils. Noted by Sorokin, op. cit., 419.

the A.R.A. men, no less than the evidence of their own eyes, pathetic, eloquent testimony of the value of this great gift.<sup>15</sup>

### SANITARY TRAINS

Another aspect of the "lateral" extension of A.R.A. activities, which brought aid to classes and localities not previously reached, was carried out by the Medical Division. The famine regions obviously suffered most from disease and to them medical aid went side by side with food products, but there were other areas, where food was not desperately short, that were virtually bare of hospital equipment and medicine. To answer the appeals for aid that poured in from the physicians of these non-famine territories, Dr. Beeuwkes secured the permission of the Soviet officials to send out a Sanitary Train. Sanitary Train No. 1, in charge of Dr. Ross, left Moscow August 3, 1922, with twenty-one car loads of supplies. With it went the Russian Red Cross Train No. 5, consisting of a dining car, kitchen car, two coaches, and a supply car for the soldier guards. Within a month the Sanitary Train traveled 2,000 miles, established bases of distribution in the cities of Tula, Orel, Kursk, Voronesh, Koslov, Tambov, and Ryazan, from which the supplies radiated to the towns and villages of the great areas of which these cities are the centers.

In the spring of 1923, the range of medical supply was again extended. During March, April, and May, Sanitary Train No. 2, piloted by Dr. Toole, again visited the seven cities already mentioned and, in addition, Kaluga and Briansk, all lying to the south of Moscow. Then "No. 2" swung north to Yaroslav, Kostroma, Vladimir, Ivanovo-Voznessensk, Tver, Rybinsk, and Rostov, with many stops at way stations, thus bringing American medical supplies to an area of 155,000 square miles with over 20,000,000 inhabitants, in addition to

<sup>15</sup> The funds administered by the A.R.A. for individual relief were distributed to the several categories in the following approximate amounts: University professors and other teachers—\$527,659; physicians, nurses, and attendants—\$123,587; artists and musicians—\$13,791; ballet schools—\$2,900; writers—\$4,100; religious bodies—\$10,000; intelligentsia generally—\$330,000. Special relief, not earmarked, but given generally to groups of this class—\$194,000. Total—\$1,206,037. Organizations affiliated with the A.R.A. also distributed thousands of dollars worth of food packages to individuals of all classes. Ellingston, *op. cit.*, 134.

the famine areas of the east and south where the regular medical program was applied.

### A RE-SURVEY OF RUSSIAN FOOD CONDITIONS

Following the procedure of the year before, Hoover in January asked Dr. Hutchinson, who had left Russia and was recuperating from an illness in southern Europe, to return to Moscow and prepare new estimates of the food situation. Illness delayed Hutchinson's return, but during the winter and spring Ellingston and Brooks of the Moscow headquarters had been collecting all recent information available on this subject from official, private, and A.R.A. sources. On the basis of this information, they made a report on the probable crop of 1923 which they estimated would yield a fair surplus, sufficient to dispose definitely of the question of further large food imports, such as those of the A.R.A. Hutchinson on his return to Russia accepted in the main the conclusion of this report.

On May 14, Dr. Hutchinson made a formal report, of which the following are the principal conclusions: The total crop of bread and fodder cereals would approximate 2,537,000,000 poods, which with a probable consumption of 2,084,000,000 poods would leave a surplus of 453,000,000.<sup>16</sup> "This figure," says the report, "probably represents a maximum possibility. . . . In respect to area under cultivation Russian agriculture shows marked improvement. Under the stimulus of a reversal of governmental policy as to landholding and taxation, the tilled acreage is rapidly coming back to its pre-war normal. But it is unlikely that this increased cultivation will produce anything like the pre-war surpluses. . . . On the whole we may conclude that unless some seriously adverse weather conditions develop, the vegetable foodstuffs supply is certain to return in 1923 to its full normal dimensions except as to exportable surplus. Animal foodstuffs, on the other hand, though they will unquestionably show some improvement through increase in stock and betterment of conditions, will remain, cer-

<sup>16</sup> The consumption figure was derived by taking the average gross crop, less average export divided by population for the years 1908-12 from data in the *Statisticheskii Ezhegodnik Rossii*, St. Petersburg, 1914.



tainly for the coming year, from 40 to 50 per cent below normal. . . ." <sup>17</sup>

In addition to these estimates by Hutchinson, Ellington, and Brooks, who supported the general impression that the day of emergency relief in Russia was passed, Haskell asked all District Supervisors and all Chiefs of Divisions in the Headquarters to give their opinion concerning the continuation of operations. None of them believed that the relief should be continued. The consensus was that the condition which could truly be described as famine no longer existed; that there was an abundance of cheap food in the markets, and an absence of the epidemics that had accompanied the famine of the year before. There was, as one of the replies phrased it, "a conviction that our protracted relief work, as such, will never dispel general poverty in Russia, and reconstruct the country; that decent conditions can only be established in Russia as a result of economic reconstruction, the rapidity of which in a large measure will principally depend on the steps taken by the Soviet Government to permit foreign and domestic trade to follow its natural course with a minimum of governmental interference." These reports when telegraphed to America confirmed the tentative decision to liquidate the whole Russian relief operation.

### LIQUIDATION

The tentative plan for the liquidation of the Russian Unit provided for the discontinuance, first, of the auxiliary activities, medical relief and remittances, then the closing of the district feeding organizations, and finally the winding up of affairs in Moscow. With the preparations for the liquidation of the Russian Unit, the A.R.A. headquarters in New York prepared to close its European offices in Warsaw, Vienna, Paris, Constantinople, Prague, and Hamburg. The improvement in European conditions had already reached the point where the A.R.A. Missions at these points were engaged chiefly in the administration of special donations for specific classes, and in the sale of A.R.A. remittances for Russia. As for this remit-

<sup>17</sup> L. Hutchinson, "Food Conditions in Russia," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXVIII, 3-16.

tance business, the time had now come to discontinue it. The price of food in Russia had fallen below the price in America, hence the potential buyer could give greater value to the beneficiary by sending him ten dollars than by buying a food package for him. Moreover, by this time banks and other enterprises had, by agreement with the Soviet Government, resumed the money remittance business, and thus the services of the A.R.A. were no longer needed in this particular. Food and clothing remittance sales, therefore, were discontinued in America on March 15, 1923, and in Europe on April 1. On this date the offices in Paris, Hamburg, and Prague closed their doors; Constantinople on May 1, and Vienna and Warsaw on June 1.

The proposal to liquidate was not immediately made public, because of the confusion that might ensue both in Russia and out, but, as early as April 27, Haskell had forecasted it in an announcement to the press in which he referred to the likelihood of a good crop and the indications that the A.R.A. would be no longer needed in Russia after the harvest of 1923.

On June 4, Haskell wrote Kamenev formally announcing the discontinuation of the A.R.A. operations with the harvest. This decision, the letter explained, followed the official crop estimates of the government, "for the forthcoming harvest indicates that there will be a substantial surplus of food over all the internal needs of Russia . . . The surplus promising, as it does, a substantial export balance, places the Government in a strong position to secure foreign supplies of other materials. The American Relief Administration . . . feels that . . . the period of famine relief to the Russian people will have passed with the coming of this year's harvest." The letter concluded with this sentence: "The Administration will have completed two years in active service of the Russian people and in so doing has given expression of the deep sympathy of the American people for the suffering of Russia."

In his reply, on June 8, Kamenev expressed the gratitude of his government and the "labor population of Russia" for the relief that had been given. With regard to the necessity of further help, Kamenev said: "I completely join you in the

viewpoint expressed by you that this year's harvest promises to be quite satisfactory and that upon its realization the Government hopes to provide for the basic needs of the former famine regions, and to utilize the surplus for the economic reconstruction of the country." Kamenev asked that his deep appreciation be transmitted to all members of the A.R.A., "for the enormous material help that has been rendered Russia, and which is a proof of the sympathetic attitude of the American people to the great calamity that had stricken a part of the population of Russia."

With the knowledge and concurrence of Russian officials, the liquidation of the auxiliary relief operations, remittances and medical relief, was under way before formal notification was made. In the case of the food and clothing remittances, the plan called for a blanket cancellation of all undelivered remittances with a refund to the purchasers on June 15. The men in the Remittance Division made a final drive to find undiscovered beneficiaries, and to persuade those who had not called for their packages to do so. These efforts were in the main successful, and when on June 15 the twenty-one remittance delivery stations closed their doors, they had completed the delivery of food and clothing packages, valued at more than \$10,000,000. The high percentage of the deliveries was one of the most striking achievements of the A.R.A. in Russia. Only by considering the general conditions in Russia, the state of the public services upon which this work had largely to depend, and the many other adverse factors, including a special hostility of the officials toward this branch of relief work, can one get a full appreciation of the achievement of Burland and his associates in the Food Remittance division.

In the medical program, the final stages were, except for the accounting, easy and unexciting in comparison with earlier days. The Medical Division had always received better cooperation from the authorities than other branches of the relief work. Its dealings with the men in the medical profession throughout the country had, with the rarest exceptions, been wholly pleasant and without friction. The completion of the



medical program involved merely the distribution of the supplies remaining in the warehouses, which required only an investigation to determine where these particular supplies were most needed, before they were distributed. But the least interesting, and perhaps the most laborious part of the medical program was the preparation of the final accounting records, by which the division was able to show the final disposition of all of the thousands of items of equipment or medicines which had been donated by either the Red Cross or the American Government, with receipts from Russian institutions, covering all of these items. The medical liquidation program was carried out on schedule, and by the first of June the American physicians had been withdrawn from the districts and only Dr. Beeuwkes and his immediate assistants remained in Moscow to complete their final records.

The liquidation of the district organizations was more complicated. The A.R.A. food stocks in Russia were sufficient to carry the program through until harvest. Instead of keeping the relief organization in being until the last of this food was consumed, it was decided to distribute at once to each institution and other feeding point its pro rata share of the remaining products, and to withdraw the American organization as soon as this was done, leaving the managers of the institutions to complete the distribution. The Posledgol, which maintained unabated its interest in the American products, evolved a conflicting plan which contemplated its taking charge of all products unconsumed when the Americans left, to be used as it saw fit. Under date of May 26, Lander sent to his district plenipotentiaries a circular letter marked "strictly confidential," requiring them to make an inventory of all A.R.A. supplies (food and medical); to close kitchens, wherever possible; to give institutions a minimum supply of rations; to prevent shipments by the A.R.A. from one district to another; and to persuade the A.R.A. District Supervisors to transfer products directly to the Posledgol or its "Fund," but not to institutions and kitchens.

The Posledgol's plan and the A.R.A.'s inevitably led to slight difficulties, though Lander's circular had specifically urged that all friction and complicating incidents be avoided.

Local plenipotentiaries and Posledgol officials did attempt to prevent the distribution to feeding points, and all manner of schemes, besides "persuasion," were used to cause these last products to fall into official hands.

These snags did not halt the liquidation program, which marched on according to the schedule. By June 13, the last shipment from America had arrived from Riga and only five cars were on the rails en route to the districts, where 80 per cent of the distribution had already been completed. On June 15, the Food Remittance stations closed, and on the same date Haskell and Kamenev signed the liquidation agreement.<sup>18</sup> This brief and admirable document, with one sure stroke, cut cleanly through a rather formidable mass of claims and counter claims, which though closely balancing, might have become the occasion of complicated and irritating negotiations. Thanks to the good sense of the makers of the document, the responsibilities of the A.R.A. in Russia were terminated with the same definiteness that they had been undertaken by the Riga Agreement, signed two years before. The accounting of the A.R.A. was accepted without question by the Soviet Government; in fact, so impressed were some of the Posledgol officials by the accounting method, that they asked to be allowed to study the A.R.A. system, in order to adapt it to their own use. The official closing of the districts followed immediately, and by June 27 all were liquidated, except two which closed within the next week.<sup>19</sup>

#### CONCLUDING CEREMONIES

In nearly all the A.R.A. districts there were festivities in honor of the Americans. These were occasions of oratory and expansive expression of official thanks to the Americans as individuals and to the American people for their aid. It was

<sup>18</sup> The text of this agreement is given in Appendix A, Doc. 18; also in *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXIX, 1-2.

<sup>19</sup> The dates on which the districts closed were: Crimea, June 20; Gomel, June 21; Kazan, June 27; Minsk, June 17; Moscow, June 27; Orenburg, June 27; Petrograd, June 19; Rostov, June 23; Samara, June 27; Saratov, June 25; Simbirsk, June 21; Tzaritzin, June 23; Ufa, July 4; Vitebsk, June 25; Alexandrovsk-Ekaterinoslav, June 24; Kharkov, June 23; Kiev, June 24; Nikolaiev-Odessa, June 25; Elizabethgrad, June 20.

undoubtedly true that orders had come from the center at Moscow to make the final days of the Americans as pleasant as possible, and to send them away with the recollection of pleasant banquets and warm official praise. Yet there was really a feeling of mutual regard between the Americans and many of the Soviet officials, for together, in spite of differences of language, of race, of temperament, of political belief, in spite of bitter controversy, they had carried through together a great undertaking against great odds.

On their departure from the districts many of the Americans were recipients of charming gifts from the local governments. Many of these were beautiful examples of local craftsmanship and some were of considerable value, in fact, one gift was valued so highly by the Russian customs authorities, that the American to whom it had been presented by gubernia officials, found that he could not afford to pay the export duty and was obliged, regretfully, to return it to the givers. But the sentiments of friendliness and gratitude which were a part of the official program could not mean as much to the Americans as the pathetic letters, scrawled on bits of paper that were left at the kitchens, by peasant children, men, and women, or the many personal farewells from Russian employees, and all those whom the Americans had come to know so well during the bitter days of famine.

In Moscow on June 16, the day after the liquidation agreement was completed, Colonel Haskell and the Chiefs of Divisions gave an informal dinner to those members of the Soviet Government with whom the A.R.A. had carried on most of its dealings. The members of the government present were Kamenev, Djerjinsky, Chicherin, Litvinov, Sokolnikov (the Commissar of Finance), Radek, Lander, and the latter's secretary, Volodin. No representatives of the press were present, and the inevitable speeches were in most cases informal. A notable exception was Chicherin who, in spite of his advocacy and practice of informal diplomacy, was careful to observe the traditional diplomatic caution and read his speech from a manuscript. This is quoted in extenso, since it expresses the point of view reiterated in one form or another in all the speeches made by the Russians:



"In honoring at the present function the representatives of the A.R.A. and its head, the highly esteemed Colonel Haskell, who with such tact and consummate skill and with such energy and devotion has carried out in Russia his responsible and arduous task and is leaving behind him the kindest remembrances, the representatives of the Russian Republic, through the medium of the A.R.A., greet the entire American nation with whom, we hope, we shall soon be united by enduring friendly ties. The work of the A.R.A. is the work of broad masses of the American people who at a most difficult moment have come to the assistance of the Russian people and have thus laid a firm foundation for the future unalterable relations of friendship and mutual understanding between them. The American nation, which but yesterday took possession of a gigantic virgin continent and turned it into a miracle of most perfect technique of production and culture, can better than any one else understand the similar aspirations and hopes of the peoples of Russia, who have from their bitter past inherited a great part of two continents which had remained in a primitive state as a result of a barbarous régime and oppression in the past. The hour, we hope, is not far distant when the American nation, possessed of the incalculable technique and accumulated fruit of its gigantic production, may enter into close economic coöperation with the peoples of Russia, confronted with a task still more formidable. In smoothing the path towards this brilliant future, the A.R.A. has played an ever memorable rôle, the results of which will tell for many long years to come.

We see in the rich and fruitful results of the work of the A.R.A., a harbinger of future joint work of the American nation with the peoples of Russia for the opening of her untold riches for the welfare of the entire human race. We shall like to believe that the representatives of the A.R.A. will carry away with them the conviction that so far as the Soviet Government is concerned, it will ever be ready to do its utmost to remove all obstacles to a close and durable coöperation between America and Russia. To the name of the future fruitful relations between the two nations we pay homage to-night, to the magnificent work of the A.R.A., and in reviewing the immense field of its activities and the future results of these activities we sincerely and cordially propose the toast of the A.R.A."

*(Translation of Resolution on opposite page)*

## RESOLUTION OF THE SOVIET OF PEOPLES COMMISSARS

In the trying hour of a great and overwhelming disaster, the people of the United States, represented by the A.R.A., responded to the needs of the population, already exhausted by intervention and blockade, in the famine stricken parts of Russia and Federated Republics.

Unselfishly, the A.R.A. came to the aid of the people and organized on a broad scale the supply and distribution of food products and other articles of prime necessity.

Due to the enormous and entirely disinterested efforts of the A.R.A., millions of people of all ages were saved from death, and entire districts and even cities were saved from the horrible catastrophe which threatened them.

Now when the famine is over and the colossal work of the A.R.A. comes to a close, the Soviet of Peoples Commissars, in the name of the millions of people saved and in the name of all the working people of Soviet Russia and the Federated Republics counts it a duty to express before the whole world its deepest thanks to this organization, to its leader, Herbert Hoover, to its representative in Russia, Colonel Haskell, and to all its workers, and to declare that the people inhabiting the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will never forget the help given them by the American people, through the A.R.A., seeing in it a pledge of the future friendship of the two nations.

L. KAMENEV,

Acting President of the Council of Peoples Commissars.

N. GORBUNOV,

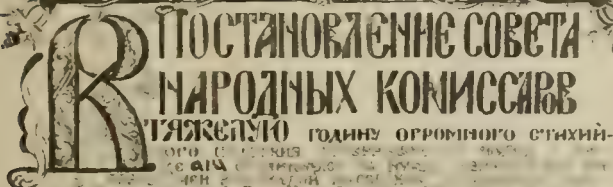
Chief of the Administrative Dept. of the Council of Peoples Commissars.

L. FOTIEVA,

Secretary of the Council of Peoples Commissars.

Moscow, Kremlin,

July 10, 1923.



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1. The first part of the document is a letter from the President of the United States to the Congress, dated January 1, 1861. It is a formal address, and it begins with the words "I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th inst."

*[Faint handwritten notes at bottom]*

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Trotsky, who was also invited to the party, could not attend because of his absence from the city. In his letter of regret, the concluding sentence again expressed the same hope, which during these final months had flowered so profusely:

"I sincerely trust that you and your co-workers, in spite of the often difficult conditions in which the organization of the A.R.A. had to work, may carry with you to America the impression that our country, which has suffered so greatly, is now beginning to recover from the blows it sustained and that both the people and the Government of Russia are ready to make every effort to reestablish normal relations with the great American people."

The final festivities were an official dinner given by the Sovnarkom (The Council of Peoples Commissars),<sup>20</sup> to bid farewell to Colonel Haskell and members of his staff. A number of other Americans in Moscow at that time were also guests and at the reception following the dinner when speeches were given, the representatives of the Russian, American, and British press were present.

Speaking officially, as the acting President of the Sovnarkom, the position held by Lenin until his death, Kamenev hoped that relations between the two countries would soon be resumed and that the Americans, after having lived in Russia, would on their return destroy many of the prejudices and false ideas still clouding the minds of some Americans. The following paragraph from Kamenev's speech was of particular interest to the A.R.A., since by giving testimony to the disinterestedness of the motives of the Americans, it contradicted one of the fundamental articles of faith so long and assiduously promulgated by the Communist press:

"Upon learning of the coming departure of the representatives of the A.R.A., the Sovnarkom passed a resolution, thanking the American people, in the person of the A.R.A., for responding, in the trying year of a great elemental calamity, to the need of the population, worn out by intervention and blockade, of Russia and the United Republics, and coming self-sacrificingly to its aid, organizing on a tremendous scale the

<sup>20</sup> The equivalent of the Ministry in other European states.

importation and distribution of products and other articles of prime necessity. Thanks to the tremendous, utterly unselfish efforts of the A.R.A., millions of people of all ages were saved from death, and whole villages and even cities were saved from the terrible catastrophe that was threatening them. At the present time, when with the termination of the famine, the gigantic work of the A.R.A. has come to an end, the Soviet of Peoples Commissars, in the name of the saved millions and of the whole toiling people of Soviet Russia and its United Republics, considers it its duty to express before the whole world, to this organization, its head, Herbert Hoover, Col. Haskell, its representative in Russia, and all his co-workers, its profoundest gratitude, and to declare that the people populating the Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics will never forget the help given by the American people through the A.R.A., seeing in that a pledge for the future friendship of both peoples."

Other speeches were made by Chicherin, Semashko (the Commissar of Health), Krassin, and Colonel Haskell. The ceremonies concluded with the presentation to Haskell of the resolutions of the Sovnarkom, hand-printed and enclosed in an elaborately decorated case.<sup>21</sup> Gifts were also presented to Haskell and seven of the members of the Moscow staff, before their departure from Moscow on July 20, 1923.

There is no reason to believe that these glowing tributes, in spite of their obvious political expediency, did not express—a little warmly, perhaps—the real feeling of the men who uttered them. They of all men knew the value of the aid that was given, and the difficulties. The coöperation which men like Kamenev, Djerjinsky, and Lander had given to the A.R.A. was, of course, a more convincing proof of the sincerity of their feelings toward the organization. Without this coöperation in the times of crises, the A.R.A. would surely have been unable to break through the barriers made more hazardous by the ignorance and persistent hostility of bigoted Communist partizans.

It is no part of our present business to attempt to evaluate this work. But one is perhaps justified in believing that this aid to a nation whose suffering has been preëminent in an age

<sup>21</sup> The resolutions of the Sovnarkom are reproduced on page 398.



of suffering was the concrete and substantial expression of an ideal which Americans cherish. It has made for America a unique place in the hearts of millions of Russian people. As the agent of America in this enterprise, the A.R.A. worked hard, fought hard to overcome the obstacles, to conquer the opposition that stood in the way of its achievement. When its work was finished, it went home.



## BOOK II





## CHAPTER XVII

### FOOD REMITTANCES

THE Food Remittance Agreement was signed on October 19, 1921; the first deliveries made on November 21 in Moscow. The sale of remittances was discontinued in America on March 15, 1923, and in Europe on April first. Remittance delivery stations in Russia closed on June 15, 1923. During this period the A.R.A. sold \$9,305,300 food remittances to individuals and food remittance supplies to other organizations in Russia which brought the total to \$13,680,193. Nearly 99 per cent were delivered. These deliveries represent *seventy-five thousand tons of foodstuffs*. The margin of profit from this transaction which went to swell the general relief funds was approximately \$3,600,000, a sum sufficient to feed 3,600,000 children for one month.

#### THE SYSTEM

The Food Remittance system worked in this fashion:<sup>1</sup> The buyer of the remittance in America, or elsewhere outside Russia, paid ten dollars to the A.R.A. The A.R.A. obligated itself to find the person in Russia whom the buyer designated as beneficiary, and to deliver to him a food package containing the following commodities, or their equivalent in food or caloric value: Flour—49 pounds; rice—25 pounds; tea—3 pounds; fats—10 pounds; sugar—10 pounds; preserved milk—20 one-pound cans. On receiving the package the beneficiary signed duplicate receipts, one of which was returned to the purchaser. In case the A.R.A. could not deliver the package in ninety days, it returned the ten dollars to the buyer. The food constituting the package, purchased in great quantities, cost the A.R.A. \$6.75. Transportation, insurance, and

<sup>1</sup> "Food Remittance Memorandum No. 2," issued in Moscow, December 1, 1921, describes in detail the mechanics of the operation as conducted in Russia. Appendix A, Doc. V.

overhead cost about \$1.00, making a total cost of \$7.75.<sup>2</sup> The margin of \$2.25, which of course varied in accordance with price fluctuations, constituted first, a margin of safety, and second, a margin of profit, which formed an important increment to the funds available for childfeeding. In addition to the individual packages there were "group sales," to groups in America and elsewhere for the benefit of groups or communities in Russia, to which the A.R.A. made deliveries. There were also "bulk sales," made chiefly to relief societies and similar organizations, to whose representatives in Russia the A.R.A. turned over the commodities in bulk for distribution. Such is the bare summary of an auxiliary department of the A.R.A. Looked at merely as a commercial operation it is a very considerable achievement under conditions of great difficulty. But as a relief operation, it is vastly more significant in what it accomplished as individual relief, supplementing the mass relief which absorbed the chief energies of the A.R.A. in Russia. Some of the phases of the Food Remittance work have already been described: Here we shall sketch some of the other important aspects which were crowded out of the preceding narrative.<sup>3</sup>

### ORIGIN

The Food Remittance system in Russia was the lineal descendant of a money remittance operation carried on by the A.R.A. in Central Europe in 1919.<sup>4</sup> Its parent, whom it resembled more closely, was the Food Draft originated by the A.R.A. in 1920.<sup>5</sup> The end of the war in 1918 left commercial

<sup>2</sup> The retail price of the package in America ran from \$8.00 to \$10.00. The value of the package in Russia varied from over \$45.00 in February, 1922, to about \$6.00 in May and June, 1923, when the economic situation (Chapter XVI) caused Russian food prices to drop below the American level.

<sup>3</sup> The story of the Food and Clothing Remittance operations in Russia has been told fully and vividly by J. R. Ellingston in "The Carriage of Philanthropy," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XLIII. It is from this account that the material of this chapter is drawn.

<sup>4</sup> *A.R.A. Bulletin*, IX, 1-7.

<sup>5</sup> Edgar Rickard, "Genesis and the Development of the Food Draft," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Series 2, II, 6-9; A. E. Taylor, "Principles of the Food Draft," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Series 2, II, 10-13; W. G. Brown, "Operation of the Food Draft Plan," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Series 2, II, 14-21; R. A. Jackson, "The Purchasing and Shipping of Warehouse Foodstuffs," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Series 2, II, 22-28; "Successful Conclusion of Food Draft Operations," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Series 2, XII, 1-3.



connections still broken and difficult to reestablish. The new governments needed dollar credits to buy food; hungry and destitute people needed the support of relatives and friends in America; the friends in America were ready to help; but there was no way except the dubious medium of exchange speculators who flourished by their immoral, but unfortunately legal manipulations. Hoover conceived the idea of directing the flow of dollar remittances through a safe channel, thereby creating the desired dollar credits, and at the same time encouraging the flow of private aid in Europe and putting a spoke in the wheels of the cutthroat speculators. By arrangement with the Federal Reserve Bank of the United States and the governments of the countries concerned, the dollar remittances were turned over to the A.R.A., which set up an equivalent food credit for the governments of the countries to which the remittances were addressed. The governments honored the remittances in their own currency through a specified bank at a fixed rate of exchange. The plan was in operation from April 15 to June 30, 1919, and \$7,000,000 in remittances were handled by the A.R.A. in those ten weeks. This amount, converted into food by the A.R.A., was of great importance to Central Europe in those difficult days. The reestablishment of international banking connections rendered the intervention of the A.R.A. in this field no longer necessary.

Although exchange operations through the normal channels facilitated commercial activity, this did not reduce the food shortage. In fact, it contributed somewhat to the increase of food prices. Recognition of these facts led Hoover and his associates, Rickard, Barnes, Gray and Flesh, to work out a remittance system in which food instead of money was the medium, and for which the A.R.A. organization—distributing, purchasing, shipping—could be utilized. The result was the Food Draft. The method of operation was the same as the Food Remittance described above, except that in the earlier system the buyer sent his draft through the mail to the beneficiary who “cashed” it at an A.R.A. warehouse.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup>The shifting of the population, the condition of the postal service, and the generally disturbed situation made it inexpedient to use the “draft” system in Russia. The “remittance” imposed a greater burden on the A.R.A., but gave greater assurance of successful delivery of packages.

The Food Drafts were a great success. The beneficiary received food worth, usually, three times what the buyer in America had paid for it. For the buyer it provided a way of helping some one in need, that was safe, effective, and personal. The coöperation of American banks in selling drafts, the prestige of the A.R.A., and the efficient working of the system combined to make it a large-scale activity. The first draft was sold on January 23, 1920, and during the following eighteen months the sales reached \$8,288,848. The margin of profit for general relief was \$2,506,103, more than enough to cover the whole overhead expense of the A.R.A., so that every penny contributed for childfeeding during this period went for the purchase of food and other relief supplies.

In time, the economic situation of Central Europe changed, the supply of food increased, and the price fell until it became advantageous to the Central European to ask his relative to send a money draft instead of a food draft. That meant that the Food Draft system (the American Relief Administration Warehouses was its official designation) had served its purpose. Sales, therefore, were discontinued on April 30, 1921.

#### ESTABLISHMENT IN RUSSIA

All the circumstances which made the Food Drafts such an important auxiliary of relief work in Central Europe obtained in Russia—in even greater measure. The food shortage was more acute, commercial connections with the rest of the world more completely broken, the financial requirements of relief more extensive. Could such an operation be carried out it would achieve even greater benefits. But could it be carried out? There were many obstacles in Russia that the earlier Food Drafts had never been obliged to face. On the official side, Central European governments had welcomed the scheme and given it full support. The government of Russia was Communist in theory, and anti-capitalist in practice, while the Food Draft system, though benevolent in aim, was shamelessly capitalistic in its methods. Moreover, Russia was a vast country with communications—railways, telegraphs, ports,—shattered by long war and revolution. Civil war, hunger,

and fear had driven thousands from their homes and broken off the very contacts with the outside world upon which the Food Draft system had to depend. From the business standpoint, the Russian food draft proposal represented a tremendous financial risk, which the A.R.A. would have to bear without any participation of the buyers. The possibilities of loss from political disturbances, banditry, or transport difficulties were very real until several months after the relief operations were actually under way. The establishment of a food draft or remittance operation meant taking a long, long chance, but the directors of the A.R.A. believed that the splendid possibilities of the scheme warranted taking that chance. And they were right.<sup>7</sup>

### EARLY TRIALS

Yet before the Food Remittance operation proved its ability to survive, it nearly justified all the fears that pessimists had held of its possibilities. Its beginnings coincided with the transportation troubles which so nearly halted the major relief work. And the Food Remittance Department, being in a way a side line, naturally received no preference in the allocation of failing transport. Likewise, official suspicion and hostility which added to the troubles of early days of relief, weighed particularly heavily on this department which, even more than the mass relief, tended to place individuals beyond the reach of the food weapon of the dictatorship. The Communists recognized that those most likely to receive food packages were persons who had relatives and friends abroad. They knew that Europe, and to a less degree America, harbored thousands who had fled or had been driven from Russia as enemies of the revolutionary government. Therefore, the officials reasoned, the remittances might become a channel for their enemies outside to aid the enemies within their gates. That the Food Remittance Agreement provided safeguards against this was not enough. It took a long time, needless to say, to convince the officials that the A.R.A. would not lend itself to any activity of this kind. A good deal has already been said in the earlier chapters of the causes and nature of

<sup>7</sup> The Food Remittance Agreement is given in Appendix A, Doc. IV.

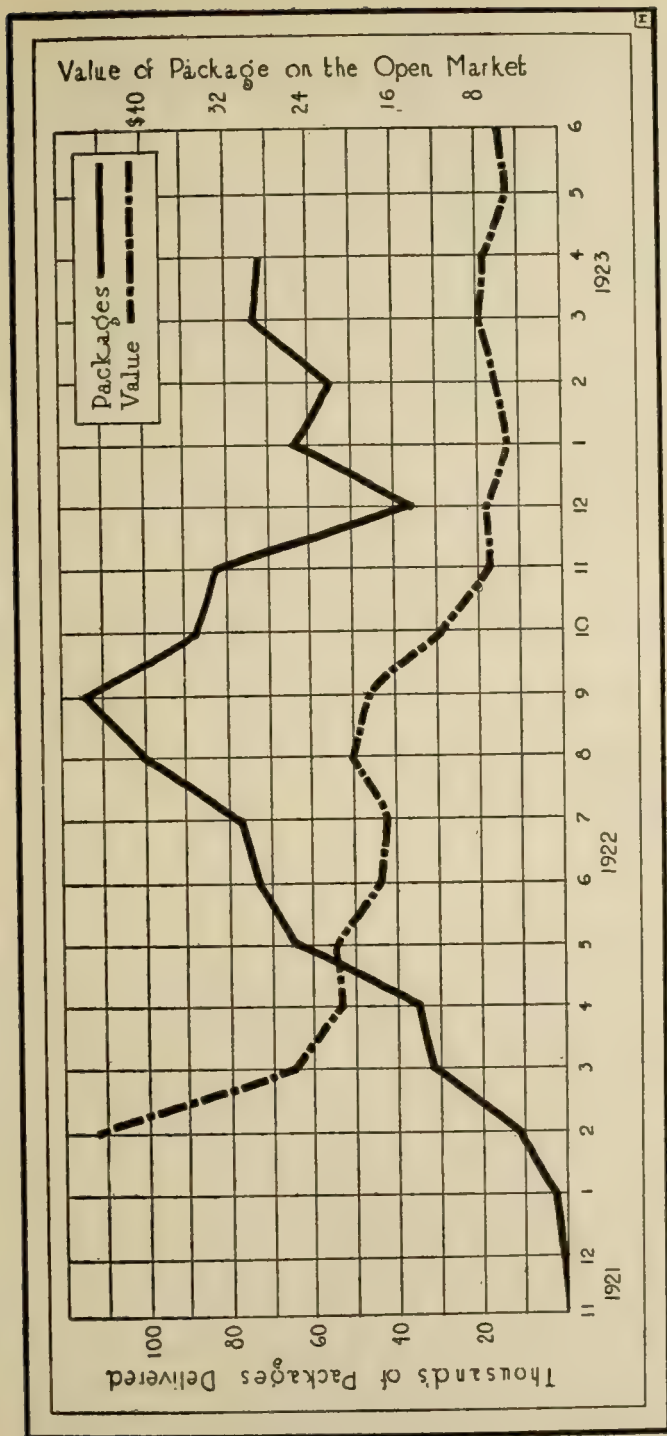


the obstacles to relief in the fields of transport and official relations. They were prime factors in the situation which threatened to put an end to the Food Remittance work in its early days, and there were other factors peculiar to the remittance business.

There was the matter of containers. The components of the food packages were shipped into Russia in bulk. For delivery to individuals, they must be distributed in small packages in the prescribed amounts. This necessitated containers, bags, paper, tins, wooden boxes, string, nails, and so forth. On investigation it appeared that Russia was practically devoid of these articles and lacked the raw materials, plants, and organization to produce them. One experience in local production illustrates the situation. Tins were needed to pack lard, the fat component of the package. Burland, the Chief of the Division, found a manufacturer who had a supply of material for making stove pipes. The manufacturer was willing to undertake the manufacture of lard tins, but could name no fixed rate, even when paid in dollars. "It all depends," he said, "on my employees. If they want to raise wages, they hold a meeting with that end in view and I have no choice but to abide by the result." Burland began by paying eighteen cents apiece for his tins, but in three months the price had gone up to twenty-eight cents, which forced the A.R.A. to look elsewhere for its lard containers.

Containers had been ordered abroad in October (1921) but because of ice, accidents to ships, and other causes, they did not reach Russia until March (1922). In the meantime, all sorts of expedients were resorted to. Gunny sacks were cut in two and tied or sewed into bags; paper sacks were made out of ledger sheets pasted together; beneficiaries were asked to return the containers in which they received their packages; and later they were asked to bring receptacles with them when they called for their packages. All this slowed up deliveries.

But more serious was the lack of transport. Daily appeals to Eiduk brought no cars to move the packages that lay ready for shipment in the Boinia Warehouse in Moscow. Sometimes cars already loaded waited for days for officials to order them moved. In the meantime, the delivery stations were be-



Relation between package distribution and value of the package on the Russian Market.

sieged by crowds of anxious men and women, who had learned that packages had been sent them and now demanded immediate delivery. They stormed the delivery offices, hung about the doors in crowds and, having experienced dishonesty and corruption, began to believe that they had again been robbed by somebody, and probably by the A.R.A. In time, the complaints of those who had been asked to wait came back to the buyers of the remittances who, in turn, swarmed into the selling offices demanding their money back. Patient explanations in many languages persuaded most that under the difficult conditions of delivery more time should be allowed and thus there were relatively few cancellations. Nevertheless as weeks passed without much improvement, the officers of the A.R.A. in New York began to fear that the difficulties of transport were too great to be overcome. They began to think of stopping all sales and of refunding to all buyers. The following table, showing sales and deliveries during these critical months, tells the tale:

<i>Month</i>	<i>Total Sales</i>	<i>Total Deliveries</i>
October (1921) .....	2,655	—
November .....	15,455	49
December .....	32,273	841
January (1922) .....	26,586	4,090
February .....	30,281 <sup>a</sup>	11,934
March .....	56,197	32,233
April .....	72,733	35,023

A temporary alleviation came in January as the result of an ultimatum to Eiduk. George Barr Baker, one of the New York Directors of the A.R.A., was in Moscow at this time. He saw the transport situation first hand, and perceived the part played by the inefficiency and hostility of Eiduk's office. Two days before his departure from Moscow he had an interview with the Plenipotentiary, through the usual interpreter. "Mr. Eiduk," he said, "I am leaving Moscow on January 23. I shall be in London on the 28th. I shall sail for New York on February 8th, and on February 16th, the New York office of the A.R.A. will issue a statement to the press that deliveries of Food Remittance packages in Russia cannot be made; that

<sup>a</sup> It will be noted how the low deliveries of December and January caused a falling off in sales in January and February and how the jump in February deliveries is reflected in the increased sales in March.



sales will cease, and money for undelivered packages be returned." There was a moment's pause. Then the interpreter began to translate to Mr. Eiduk. "I understand," interrupted Mr. Eiduk, sharply, in perfect English. He recovered himself immediately, however, and in rapid, excited Russian directed the interpreter to ask if the A.R.A. would continue its Food Remittance operation provided he dispatched a special train of packages to run on passenger schedule. "We'll have to see it start first," Baker replied.

Four days after Baker's departure (January 27), three trains with fifty-seven cars, containing 17,100 Food Remittance packages, left Moscow traveling on passenger schedules for the district delivery stations. Notice of this reached Baker in London and the plan of immediate liquidation of the Food Remittance was temporarily abandoned. These 17,100 packages were really only a drop in the bucket. Odessa alone needed 15,000. But they helped, and if the rate of movement could have been continued all would have been well. But there was an immediate lapse. By this time (February), Soviet seed, A.R.A. childfeeding supplies, and American corn were all demanding cars. The railway administration was becoming more demoralized. The New York office of the A.R.A. was still being flooded with complaints from Food Remittance purchasers. Things looked very black. Rickard, Director General of the A.R.A., cabled reluctantly to Moscow that there seemed to be nothing to do but liquidate and refund. Conditions were too hopeless. A statement to this effect was prepared for the press in New York, and ready for release on March 9. But, in the meantime, things had changed. Burland, by furious effort, had at last secured from the government adequate space in which to set up packing machinery and other needed equipment. The long looked for containers reached Moscow on March 6, after being on the rails from Riga—a distance of 573 miles—since February 2. Finally, the 17,100 packages sent to the delivery stations as a result of the Baker ultimatum began to reach and appease the beneficiaries, and February deliveries reached nearly 12,000. Burland's cable describing these encouraging developments, like the rescuers in a melodrama who arrive just as the defenders

of the fort are about to be overcome, reached New York a few hours before the Food Remittance liquidation statement was to be sent to the press. The statement remained unsent, and the Food Remittance operation was saved from an untimely end.

Unfortunately, we cannot conclude the account of this period with the conventional remark that Burland and the Food Remittance Division lived happily ever after. Transportation remained an ever-present menace to peace and progress until after Haskell's ultimatum of April 10, 1922, and until Djerjinsky had carried through the reorganization of the transport system. Official hostility continued unabated until Lander superseded Eiduk as the Soviet Plenipotentiary in the summer of 1922. There were periods of shortage in one commodity or another, necessitating the issue of a package with slightly different components, but never again was the question of liquidation raised until changed conditions in Russia indicated that remittances of food were no longer needed. The success of the operation was an established fact. Monthly sales reached the peak in July 1922, thereafter fluctuating in accordance with the season, with a general tendency to decline as food conditions throughout the country improved.

#### SALES PROMOTION

Whether the Food Remittance operation was looked at as a purely benevolent enterprise offering a unique service to persons who wished to send help to individuals in Russia, or as a commercial enterprise seeking to make a profit for use in mass relief, it was incumbent on the A.R.A. to give the operation the widest possible publicity. The object of this publicity was fundamentally sales promotion, but the object was not to be attained by advertising which created a demand, for the demand already existed, but rather by making the remittance service known to all potential users. Various methods were used. The newspaper press, and weekly and monthly magazines, recognizing the benevolent purpose of the undertaking, gave it their blessing and wide publicity. There were no paid advertisements. Relief societies, racial and religious organiza-

tions encouraged the use of remittances by their constituents. Thus the Joint Distribution Committee alone sold over \$2,000,000 worth of remittances. Similarly the American Volga Relief Society, the National Lutheran Council, the Mennonite Central Committee, the American Federation of Ukrainian Jews, the Landsmanschaften, and the Y.M.C.A., either participated in the sale of remittances or helped effectively to spread the news of them. As in the case of the Food Drafts, member banks of the American Bankers Association in regions of potential buyers assisted in calling attention to the services offered by the A.R.A. In order to allay any suspicion that the Soviet Government might interfere with the delivery of food packages, the A.R.A. persuaded Eiduk to issue a statement inviting persons in America to take advantage of the Food Remittance operation and declaring that,

"The Soviet Government proclaims that it will do everything possible to carry through the Food Remittance scheme and will regard foodstuffs brought into Russia on this plan as additional supplies not subject to requisition or distribution among the population by the Government or its agents."

In this fashion the Food Remittances secured effective publicity. But these means originating in America were not the only ones used. It was clear that the chances of success would be increased if the remittance system was well enough known in Russia, so that Russians in need, who had foreign connections, might bring it to the knowledge of their friends abroad. Following the successful precedent of the Food Draft, the A.R.A. printed and distributed in Russia about a million and a half post cards which carried an appeal for help through the use of Food Remittances. Between 600,000 and 700,000 of these appeal cards, duly addressed and signed, were forwarded by the A.R.A. to the addressees in Europe and America, and many thousands went through the Russian post. These cards were extremely effective, for they furnished a direct, personal appeal, more convincing to potential buyers of remittances than statements in the press or elsewhere. Moreover, these cards performed an important service on their own account, for they restored the connections destroyed by the war



and the hard years that followed. The two-fold service of the appeal card is illustrated by this story told by the manager of the A.R.A. Food Remittance warehouse in Petrograd:

"She came into our office in February, clad in something which may have been clothes in the far off past, with rags on her feet. She was pale and sick and she trembled as she advanced to the information desk. Can we do anything to find her son in America? All she knows is that he lives somewhere there and is a violinist. She, herself, is a war-victim. She comes from a little place near Vilna; she had a store of her own and was well off, when the war came and drove her from her home. She drifted from town to town in increasing misery. She arrived a short while ago in Petrograd; she has no one here; she is beginning to starve. People told her that the A.R.A. is doing wonders to help. Perhaps kind heaven would send her a miracle also through the A.R.A.

"We made out several appeal cards at once and addressed them to different musical organizations in the largest American cities. A couple of months pass. Again appears the same old woman, but she is hardly to be recognized; great happiness has changed her gait and appearance. Our communication reached her son, who is a famous musician in America. He had sent her packages and money. All this, thanks to the A.R.A. All attempts on the part of the son to locate his mother in the course of some years, these attempts even including sending a special searcher from America, had been in vain."

#### METHODS OF DELIVERY

Every A.R.A. district office for the administration of relief was also a Food Remittance delivery station. Other delivery stations were set up in centers not in the famine area but where a considerable business in remittances was anticipated. Such was the status of A.R.A. offices in Minsk, Gomel, Vitebsk, Kiev, and elsewhere. Wherever monthly sales justified it, these stations were placed. Nevertheless, there necessarily were many to whom packages were addressed, who could not call at the delivery stations. This necessitated the use of the post, and after extended negotiations, an arrangement was made by which the post accepted the packages—divided into

two parcels—at a fixed rate, insured them in gold, and was paid the premium in gold. The postal tariff per package at first stood at thirty-five cents. Soon it rose to \$3.50 where it remained for several months; thereafter, it fluctuated. The average rate paid throughout the whole operation was about \$2.00, which, added to the cost of crating (about sixty cents), insurance (about fifteen cents) and other incidentals, made the postal package a charge on the A.R.A. Fortunately, only 1.7 per cent of the beneficiaries asked for postal deliveries.

The small number of postal deliveries is explained, not by the proximity of consignees to the delivery stations, but by their unwillingness to entrust the precious packages to any but their own hands, or those of trusted agents. If the distance was considerable they undertook hazardous journeys on trains jammed with refugees, who died of typhus, hunger, or cold, as the trains crawled monotonously along. There were other hazards than disease and cold.

“On January 2, 1922, Aron and Ilia Scheftel, father and son, travelled to Moscow from Kostroma to take delivery of seven packages consigned to them from America. On returning to Kostroma with their food, the railroad division of the Cheka (political police) arrested them at Jaroslav, charging them with profiteering in foodstuffs. Their food was confiscated, their money taken from them, and they were thrown into prison at Jaroslav. There they remained without a hearing for two weeks. Meanwhile the son contracted typhus. On January 15, the Cheka wired the Moscow A.R.A., asking whether the organization existed by authority of the Soviet Government, and whether it had furnished the food taken from the Scheftels. Several days later, an old woman, sobbing, appeared at the Food Remittance office with a note from the Jaroslav Cheka putting the same questions as the telegram, and asking for documents to prove that the old woman's husband and son had come by the food honestly. The A.R.A. took immediate steps, of course, to effect the release of the unfortunate pair, but they did not leave prison till January 26th.”<sup>9</sup>

In some places where railways did not exist villagers with their packages traveled in caravans as protection against ban-

<sup>9</sup> Ellingston, *op. cit.*, 63.

dits. In other sections, the District Supervisors utilized their sub-district warehouses as delivery stations. Elsewhere they set up temporary stations whither they shipped the packages for that neighborhood in car load lots.

There were two other important problems connected with deliveries. One was finding those beneficiaries who did not appear to claim their packages in response to the notification card. The other was the prevention of graft, fraud, and speculation at the expense of the system and the recipients of packages. Various methods were used to discover the whereabouts of those who could not be found at the addresses given by the donors of the packages. Inspectors went out and made personal inquiries; the police lists were resorted to; the names of the missing were published in the newspapers and on placards; Young Pioneers (the equivalent of Boy Scouts in Russia) were employed to scour the town; and in the rural districts, A.R.A. committees carried on the search in the villages. Thanks to these measures the A.R.A. cancelled only 1.03 per cent of the 947,795 individual packages because of inability to find the consignee.<sup>10</sup>

As is well known, graft flourished in Czarist Russia and fraud was not unknown. Since the revolution these evils had spread. The Communist doctrine of socialization and its ramifications, interpreted by each according to his need, contributed to the spread of these evils. The desperate struggle for exist-

<sup>10</sup> Cancellations from all causes amounted to only 1.66 per cent of the total business of the operation. The causes of cancellation and the percentage of the total business were as follows:

1. (a) Total of advices cancelled at Moscow Headquarters and ordered refunded without attempting delivery, e.g., remittances addressed to Siberia, Cis-Caucasia, et cetera .....	0.12 per cent
(b) Marked cancelled on duplicate advice when original received .....	0.05 " "
2. Total of advices cancelled after delivery attempted:	
At request of purchaser .....	0.20 " "
At request of beneficiary .....	0.02 " "
Beneficiary deceased or left Russia .....	0.09 " "
Unable locate beneficiary .....	1.03 " "
Remittances calling for delivery outside of European Russia .....	0.01 " "
Liquidation cancellations .....	0.14 " "
Cancelled at request Soviet Government .....	— " "
Total cancellations .....	1.66 per cent



ence and the general insecurity of life broke down the moral concepts of many who had been scrupulously honest in their property relationships. Hence the fight against graft and fraud had to be relentlessly, continuously waged.

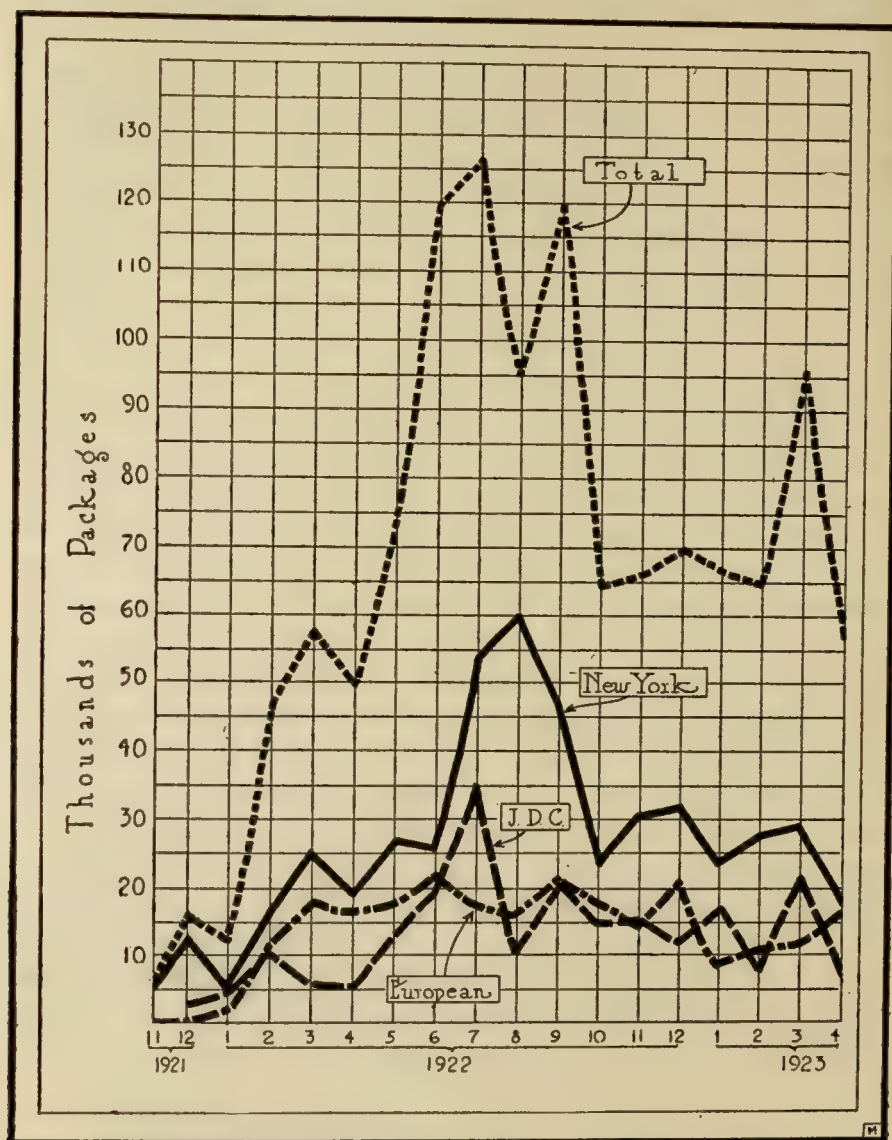
Whether the food packages were delivered to the addressee or his authorized agent, the A.R.A. required as complete identification as possible which included officially stamped papers of the police or other authorities. This, however, was not fraud proof. The Moscow delivery station, for example, discovered that the police in nearby villages were selling certificates of identity for the equivalent of fifty cents each. Corroborating evidence was therefore demanded, and the beneficiary was asked to give the name of the donor of the package. If he did not know, his identification papers received double scrutiny.

The Moscow packing room discovered another type of fraud, the substitution of sand for sugar, tin foil for tea. In Kharkov, a postal employee stole notification cards from the mail, and turned them over to a confederate who, with forged documents, collected the packages. In Vitebsk, a Russian employee of the A.R.A. got possession of a government stamp, forged documents naming himself as agent of the beneficiaries, and got a few packages. Warehouse employees sometimes demanded a few pounds of sugar, some tea, or a tin of milk by way of facilitating prompt delivery. The delivery stations quickly discovered these practices, reimbursed the defrauded, and turned the grafters over to the police. The thieves soon became discouraged. Seventy-five per cent of the misdeliveries attributable to fraud occurred during the first four or five months of the operation, and the total misdeliveries as a result of fraud, carelessness, similarity of names, and other causes was only 272 food packages and sixteen clothing packages.

#### SPECULATION IN FOOD REMITTANCE PRODUCTS

One of the Soviet Government's original objections to the Food Remittance plan was the fear that its products would become an important asset to the stocks of speculators and private traders. Although the N.E.P. had legalized private trade, the government still warred on speculators and watched with

an unfriendly eye any private enterprise that might challenge the state monopoly of foreign trade, or the privileged position



Sales of Food Remittances, by Months.

of its organizations of internal trade. The A.R.A. had its own reasons for wishing to prevent indiscriminate trading in remittance commodities. The object was to bring food to those who needed it, not to broaden the field of profit making in

Russia. The Food Remittance Agreement, therefore, provided that orders for more than five packages to a single individual should be submitted to the Plenipotentiary who might stop delivery if he suspected speculation. Furthermore, the A.R.A. required each beneficiary to sign a promise not to sell any part of his package, and from the walls of the delivery station glaring proclamations threatened any one speculating in food packages with immediate arrest. These arrangements prevented trafficking in remittance commodities on a large scale,<sup>11</sup> but they did not prevent occasional appearance of American white flour, tinned milk, sugar, and the like in the markets and stores. The A.R.A. called this to the attention of the police, and there were, here and there, a few raids with no permanent results. There was no serious effort to stop this small trading, for both the A.R.A. and Soviet officials realized that it was inevitable and, in fact, was not an undesirable development. Many recipients of packages needed other materials as badly as food—articles of clothing, fuel, or if they were peasants, nails or salt. These they could obtain by bartering a few tins of milk, part of their sugar or flour. Where these American commodities appeared on the markets, the prices of local food products tended to fall, and thus others than those to whom the packages were consigned benefited by them.

#### THE HAZARDS OF GROUP AND BULK REMITTANCES

By means of "group" and "bulk" remittances to which reference was made at the beginning of this chapter, the A.R.A. was privileged to be the medium by which a number of societies in America, most of which were based on church affiliations, came to the aid of their coreligionists in Russia. The Food Remittance system was perfectly adapted for this "group to group" relief, and the prestige and privileged position of the A.R.A. in Russia carried it over the political and racial obstacles which special relief of this character inevitably met.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> It was a fundamental of A.R.A. remittance policy to sell no food packages in Russia. This was, of course, an effective barrier to any large scale trading in remittance commodities.

<sup>12</sup> Individual relief by remittance packages is discussed more fully in Chapter XVI. Also Ellington, *op. cit.*, 106-135; E. G. Burland, "The Intelligentsia: Some Aspects of General Relief in Russia," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XLI, 4-12.



The outstanding case in which group relief ran into trouble is associated with the Patriarch Tikhon, who, until his removal by the Soviet Government, was the head of the Russian Orthodox Church.

In January, 1922, organizations in America wishing to help Orthodox priests in Russia began purchasing "bulk sales," which were addressed to Patriarch Tikhon. The Patriarch divided the first 300 packages among seven bishops in the famine provinces. The bishops, in turn, prepared a list of priests to whom the District Supervisors made deliveries. Other consignments, similarly addressed, came through during February and were handled in like manner without objection from the Soviet Government. But by March the situation had changed. The efforts of the government to take the church treasures led to bitter and sometimes bloody conflict. Patriarch Tikhon became the object of violent attack in the Communist press, and eventually he and many of his supporters were imprisoned as counter-revolutionists.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, when Burland, in accordance with the Food Remittance Agreement, notified Eiduk of the arrival of sixty-one packages addressed to the Patriarch, the Plenipotentiary (March 23, 1922) expressed doubt as to the legitimacy of the proposed distribution and asked for a list of the beneficiaries before approving the delivery of the packages. Other remittances also addressed to the Patriarch followed in succeeding months, and these Eiduk allowed to pile up without taking any

<sup>13</sup> The Soviet Government asked the Church to contribute some of its valuables to the famine fund in January, 1922. The Patriarch (February 15) issued a circular permitting churches to contribute such valuables as were not consecrated. On February 23, the All Russian Central Executive Committee decreed that all valuables containing gold, silver, or precious stones be removed from all religious establishments and given to a special famine fund within one month. The Patriarch protested and issued (March 2) a circular giving the Church's view regarding the seizure of consecrated objects. There was some physical resistance to the seizures, thereupon a number of priests and laymen were seized and imprisoned, some with and some without trial. The most famous of these trials was that of "the Fifty-four" in Moscow (April 26-May 6, 1922), in the course of which the Patriarch was also accused and confined. This and subsequent developments in the Soviet Government's drive against the Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches are discussed in detail but with considerable bias by Captain Francis McCullagh, *The Bolshevik Persecution of Christianity*, London, 1924. An excellent, unbiased summary of this conflict is given in a pamphlet, *The Religious Situation in Russia*, by an anonymous author who had excellent opportunities to study the question on the ground. The pamphlet was privately distributed.

action. Finally Burland told the Plenipotentiary (June 20) that unless some action were taken, he would be compelled to cancel all the outstanding packages addressed to the Patriarch. To this Eiduk replied:

"I regret to have to inform you that I cannot give my approval for delivery of food packages to Patriarch Tikhon, on account of the latter's disloyalty and manifestly inimical attitude towards the Government of the Republic, which found expression in an open violation of her laws and precepts."

In spite of this setback, the packages eventually reached the priests who were in need of them. In June, Lander had succeeded Eiduk and the following month Burland reopened the subject and quickly reached an agreement.

Another incident illustrates both the hazards of group relief and the manner in which the work of the A.R.A. was affected by political and social conditions. In Minsk and Vitebsk, officials opposed the distribution of group packages to Jewish communities on the ground that they would result in pogroms. Furthermore, these officials demanded the right to pick the beneficiaries. Thus the A.R.A. Supervisor had to pick his difficult way between racial friction on one side, and political friction on the other. In the end the packages were delivered, and without pogroms.

### CLOTHING REMITTANCES

The great improvement in Russian food conditions after the harvest of 1922 resulted, as has been described, not only in a sharp fall in food prices, but in bringing quickly into view the harsh destitution of the Russian people in respect to other needs. For the peasant, there was the lack of animals and tools, and for both peasant and townsman, the universal need was for clothes to keep him warm. From the beginning of the Russian campaign clothing had been recognized, after food and medicine, as the great problem of relief. During the winter of 1921-22, the A.R.A. had distributed large stocks of clothing to children, and there was an occasional distribution of used clothing, collected in America by the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A.,

the Baptists, and others, that did much good. Still, the clothing problem was far from being met. To have met it adequately, considering the need and relief funds available, would have been impossible; yet, it might be possible to do more. This thought led the directors of the A.R.A. to consider clothing remittances. The transport difficulties of the first winter caused the plan to be abandoned. Under the new conditions of the autumn of 1922, the Moscow headquarters revived the idea, the Directors approved, and Haskell and Burland began negotiations with the Soviet Government. There was some objection from the Soviet Textile Trust, which feared competition and injury to the textile industry. But Russian officials, notably Kamenev and Lander, looked favorably on the scheme, and after wholly amicable but rather extended negotiations, Lander and Burland signed the Clothing Remittance Agreement on October 26, 1922.

The new agreement differed from the earlier one in two important particulars. 1. The A.R.A. was authorized to sell clothing packages to Soviet institutions and to individuals in Russia; 2. The A.R.A. agreed to pay a premium of one dollar to the Government on each package imported. This premium was to cover import duty and freight in Russia.

Clothing Remittances offered many technical complications. The contents of the Food package were acceptable to both sexes of all ages and all sizes. To succeed, the clothing packages had to be adaptable. This ruled out all ready made garments, hats, shoes, and so forth, and hence the components of the package adopted were materials in the following amounts: Woolens,  $4\frac{2}{3}$  yards; lining, 4 yards; muslin, 16 yards; flannelette, 8 yards. To these were added: Thread, 4 spools; buttons No. 1—8 pieces; buttons No. 2—16 pieces; buttons No. 3—24 pieces, none of which could be easily obtained in Russia. The materials, chosen for durability, were purchased in sufficient quantity for 80,000 packages. By buying in such great quantity the A.R.A. was able to sell for \$20.00 for delivery in Russia, with a small margin of profit and safety, a package which retailed in New York for not less than \$21.50. With freight and customs duty added, the package in Russia would have cost \$27.50. Actually, the



clothing package was worth from \$30.00 to \$40.00 in the Russian markets.

Once the new enterprise was on a clear track, the Russian Unit rushed its preparations to make it a success. The Remittance Division established a large cutting room in Moscow; mobilized a force of experienced workers; imported the specialized equipment which Russia could not furnish; and was ready for the shipments, which were made in bulk, when they began to arrive in January, 1923. In introducing the new department, the Americans employed publicity methods certainly new, and doubtless startling, to the Russians. The movies, newspapers, placards, handbills, window displays, and circulars in the mails were all used. The impending liquidation of the whole relief work necessitated discontinuing sales on March 15 in America, and on April 1 in Europe, just as the operation was getting its stride. At that time sales had reached 42,674. Of the materials in bulk unsold, those in Russia were given to children's homes, and those en route were disposed of by sale.

Though in no way comparable with the Food Remittance operation, the Clothing Remittances were a useful supplement to the other departments of relief. Both sale and gift packages, distributed as part of the special relief, described in Chapter XVI, came at an opportune time to meet a need, the urgency of which changing economic conditions strongly emphasized.

### LIQUIDATION

In the late winter and spring of 1923, it was clear that as far as food conditions were concerned the work of the Food Remittance was done. The operation continued only until the directors of the A.R.A. were convinced that the newly established relations between the Soviet State Bank and foreign banking and remittance concerns could effectively take over the service which the remittance operation had performed.

The importance of the Food Remittance work is not its bulk, though the delivery in twenty months over the vast expanse of Russia of 75,000 tons of food in packages weighing 117 pounds, is no small achievement. Its importance lies rather in its func-

tion as a complement to the major relief work. It was so conceived and administered that it could take cognizance of the individual in a manner impossible in mass relief. It could be intimate and personal. It did more than save lives peculiarly precious to the new Russia. It brought the healing touch of friendliness to men and women in every social group who had lost more than their goods and their security. For over them, it seemed, had passed in fury the whirlwind of an angry God and about them had crashed the intricate edifice of civilization. Out of the darkness came a friendly hand bringing help and human sympathy from the world unshaken by the storm.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### MEDICAL RELIEF

#### THE SCOPE OF MEDICAL RELIEF <sup>1</sup>

THE Medical Division of the A.R.A. Russian Unit was in operation from November, 1921, to June, 1923. In this period it furnished supplies to the following institutions: hospitals, 5,764, with a bed capacity of 353,332; ambulatories and dispensaries—4,123, treating daily 247,087 patients; children's homes—4,760 containing 336,821 children; day nurseries—372 with a capacity of 25,259; schools and internats—165 serving 17,999 children; homes for the aged and invalids—248 with 59,237 inmates. Other unclassified institutions raised the total number assisted to 16,419, with a constant capacity of 1,039,735 inmates. Besides this, the Division carried on a campaign of disease prevention through city sanitation and the administering of some 8,000,000 inoculations and vaccinations.

These operations necessitated a vast importation of supplies, interesting in both variety and quantity. There were, for example, *three hundred and seventy-seven* varieties of medicines, *fifteen* varieties of disinfectants, *eleven* of vaccines, *one hundred and thirty-three* of laboratory supplies; *six hundred and twenty-seven* kinds of surgical instruments, hospital, and dental supplies; *fifty-four* kinds of clothing supplies; *five* varieties of supplies for water purification. As to quantities, of the medicines, the most important are: chloroform and ether—*forty* tons; boric acid—*thirty-one* tons; castor oil—*fifty-seven*

<sup>1</sup> The materials of this chapter unless otherwise stated are from *American Medical and Sanitary Relief in the Russian Famine, 1921-1923*, by Dr. Henry Beeuwkes, Chief of the Medical Division of the A.R.A. Russian Unit. This is *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XLV. Dr. Beeuwkes' monthly reports on the medical situation and the progress of medical relief in Russia will be found in *A.R.A. Bulletins*, Ser. 2, Nos. XIX, XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV (by Dr. W. P. Davenport), XXVII, XXIX, XXXII, XXXIII, XXXVI; No. XL contains: "A Campaign of Disease Prevention" by Dr. Beeuwkes.



tons; aspirin—*fifteen* tons; magnesium sulphate—*seventy* tons; petrolatum—*one hundred* tons. The imports included many other drugs in quantities of from *ten thousand* to *fifty thousand* bottles, and vaccines, especially tetra and smallpox, of which *twelve million* doses were distributed. Among the diseases epidemic were malaria and recurrent fever. The drugs most needed to check them were quinine and neosalvarsan, both of which were practically unobtainable in Russia. Of quinine the A.R.A. imported *sixty thousand* pounds; of neosalvarsan *seven hundred thousand* tubes. Along with these came *seven hundred thousand* pounds of cod liver oil for undernourished children and sick.

Under the heading of hospital supplies comes a great variety of materials: *One thousand three hundred* complete operating sets; *two hundred and fifty thousand* other instruments for surgical and dental use; *eight million* bandages; *eighty-six thousand* bottles of collodion; *four hundred and seventy thousand* blankets; *five hundred and seventy thousand* bed sheets; *six hundred and seventy-five thousand* pajamas and night dresses; *eighty-six thousand* layettes; *eight hundred and ninety thousand* towels; *one hundred and fifty-five thousand* pillow cases and mattress covers; *eleven thousand* ice caps; *seventeen thousand* bed pans; *seventeen thousand* urinals; *forty-nine thousand* sputum cups; *twelve thousand* fountain syringes; *thirty-one thousand* hot water bottles.

The sanitation campaigns called for great quantities of disinfectants such as *two million four hundred thousand* pounds of soap; *eight hundred thousand* pounds of sulphur; *two hundred thousand* pounds of creosol; *two hundred thousand* pounds of formaldehyde; *one million* pounds of chloride of lime; *sixty thousand* bottles of carbolic acid; *fifty-five thousand* bottles of corrosive sublimate.<sup>2</sup>

These supplies reached the central medical warehouses in Moscow in nine hundred and sixty-five cars, and were re-shipped in nine hundred and fifty-six cars to distribution points, whence they went by train, by boat, and by wagon to the sixteen thousand institutions referred to above. The con-

<sup>2</sup>It is worth noting that for all these thousands of items the most complete records were kept and at the end of operations Dr. Beeuwkes presented a complete accounting supported by vouchers covering all commodities issued.

tributions which made this distribution possible came from the following sources:

The American Red Cross .....	\$3,629,831.34	(in cash and kind)
The United States Government .....	3,785,000.00	(in kind)
The Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial	270,000.00	(in cash, to cover handling expenses)
	<hr/>	
	\$7,684,831.34 <sup>3</sup>	

### THE MEDICAL FAMINE

The most striking feature of the health situation when the A.R.A. Medical Division began its operations was the appalling shortage of all materials necessary for the prevention and treatment of disease. The famine regions where, as a result of the food shortage, refugee movements and general poverty, disease was most prevalent, suffered most, but the "medical famine" covered the whole country. Even before the war, sanitation and public health administration were not among the things for which Russia was most favorably known.<sup>4</sup> Sanitation in the cities was behind western standards, though fairly adequate; in the country, it did not exist. The great bulk of equipment and medicines by which health work was carried on came from abroad.

The World War delivered the first heavy blow to Russian medical practice. It cut off or greatly curtailed the import of medical supplies, while the increase of disease raised their consumption. It halted the slow development of the health organizations. It decimated the thin ranks of the doctors.

The Revolution gave the second blow. In the time of troubles that followed, there was neither opportunity nor means to replace the used up materials. In the disorders of

<sup>3</sup> The mobilization of these and other funds has been discussed in Chapter VI. An important supplement to medical relief work was the gift of Food and Clothing Remittance packages for Russian doctors and nurses. The principal gifts were: William Bingham, 2nd, \$95,000; Rochester Community Chest, \$5,000; Dr. Henry O. Eversole, \$5,000; the Joint Distribution Committee, \$25,000, jointly administered by the J.D.C. and Dr. Beeuwkes. The Soviet Government provided warehouses and internal transportation; the A.R.A. bore the expenses of administration Chapter XVI.

<sup>4</sup> *Statisticheskii Ezhegodnik Rossii*, 1913. (Part III, p. 5-6) St. Petersburg, 1914, gives the following figures regarding Russian medical service: 7,860 hospitals, 210,473 hospital beds, 21,747 doctors (19,996 male, 1,751 female), 27,173 feldshers (22,487 male, 4,686 female).

civil strife, much equipment was looted or destroyed. The sanitation equipment of the cities deteriorated and went unrepaired. Epidemics raged with increased virulence. The number of doctors was diminished still further by deaths and by the economic situation which forced them to become manual laborers or clerks in the bureaucracy.

The aspect of towns and the condition of children's homes at the time of the arrival of the A.R.A. in Russia, has been described in the preceding pages.<sup>5</sup> The hospitals, to which the Medical Division naturally directed its attention, presented the same ghastly dilapidation. The buildings were leaky and unheated. Water at the bedside froze, and the patients suffered from frost bite. Broken pipes had cut off the supply of running water; broken drains rendered toilets and baths useless. Bed linen had entirely disappeared and patients were covered with their own filthy clothing and perhaps a single blanket, thin and ragged from long use. Broken glasses and rusty tin cups constituted the bedside equipment; ward equipment, such as thermometers, rubber goods, and bed pans, was lacking altogether. There was almost no food for either patients or attendants. In the surgical pavilions one found the same appalling lack of everything. The sterilizers which remained could not be used because of lack of fuel. Chloroform and ether were so scarce that often operations had to be performed without anesthesia. Surgical dressings and gauze had been practically used up, and such as remained were used over and over again. Sometimes the surgeons were compelled to use old newspapers. Bandages were so rare that hospitals required surgical patients to bring bandages with them. Suture materials were also so scarce that surgeons were compelled to use thread from old clothing for the closure of surgical wounds. In the stock rooms one found only empty containers, the supplies of such essentials as quinine, aspirin, neosalvarsan, bismuth, bromides, digitalis, having long since been used up. Such conditions were general. The exceptions were few—very few, and were confined to a large hospital in a large city, here and there. Even in these there was the same want of essential drugs, bedding, soap, and disinfectants. So

<sup>5</sup> Chapter IV.



general and so inclusive was the medical famine that the A.R.A. distributed no less than twelve hundred and twenty-two varieties of medical supplies, each variety being wholly or practically exhausted in Russia.

### DEMORALIZATION

In addition to this almost complete exhaustion of medical materials, political changes had demoralized the health administration. From the time of Ivan the Terrible, when the German physician Bolarius lost his head for failing to cure a member of the Czar's household, Russian medical practice climbed slowly but steadily up the long hill of advancement. It was not, however, until the emancipation of the serfs in 1861 that the masses of the people began to share to any extent in its benefits. It was due largely to the energy and enlightenment of the Great Catherine that there were as many as 337 provincial and uyezd hospitals with 5,300 beds to serve the needs of the millions of Russia's rural population, when the Zemstvos (provincial councils) ultimately took over the responsibility in local health matters in 1864. In the advancement, medical education both professional and lay, the Zemstvos and the Russian Red Cross, supported by the government and private donations, and such privately supported bodies as the anti-tuberculosis societies, played the leading part.<sup>6</sup> Though the Imperial Government regarded these public health activities benevolently enough and supported some of them financially, it is important to remember that private initiative was the driving and directing force.

The significance of this is that after the October Revolution, with the laudable purpose of extending the benefits of medical practice to all the people, the new government absorbed all public health activities in the Peoples Commissariat of Health, a gigantic bureaucratic organism which quickly destroyed the vital spark of private initiative. Having destroyed the leadership, it did not supply an adequate substitute. The management of a hospital, or the direction of a gubernia health de-

<sup>6</sup>A summary of government and private aid to needy classes previous to 1906 is given in *L'assistance publique et privée en Russie*. St. Petersburg, 1906, issued by the Direction générale de l'économie locale du Ministère de l'Intérieur.

partment, was a job as much to be desired as the management of a factory. Very often the "job" went as a reward for political regularity, professional and other qualifications being of secondary importance. Veterinarians with Communist credentials succeeded physicians with long and successful professional careers as the heads of health departments and large hospitals. The direction of specialized activities like the treatment and prevention of tuberculosis, malaria, and so forth, fell into the hands of persons with no other qualifications than the warmth of their revolutionary ardor.

Inevitably the public health service became demoralized and unable to utilize effectively even the scant materials that remained. Furthermore Russian physicians, battered by the hard conditions of life, harassed by political interference, and constantly faced with suffering which they were powerless to relieve, were overwhelmed. The heroism of these doctors, feldshers, and nurses cannot be over-praised. Hundreds met death fighting disease, without weapons, with the same dogged courage that Russian soldiers, without ammunition, met death trying to stay the German advance. The A.R.A. archives contain many stories of the fortitude of individuals who carried on in spite of incredible difficulties. One of these stories will suffice.

In a town typical of the steppe country east of the Volga, a Russian doctor had built and equipped from private funds a modern hospital to which Russians, Cossacks, and Kirghiz came for help from distances of hundreds of miles. The Revolution swept over this town, but the doctor continued as before to give aid to all who needed it, regardless of their politics or race. But, as an educated man, he was suspect, and presently was arrested and dragged away from his hospital to jail, charged with being a member of the bourgeoisie. The imprisonment did not last long. Outraged peasants and townsmen stormed the jail and released the doctor, who went back to his hospital. There followed new military operations in the region and a Cossack anti-Bolshevik Army seized the town, but its tenure was short. Back came the Reds. The doctor's family fled in a peasant cart to the steppes, but the physician remained at his post. His arrest followed, but this time he was

removed to another town. In his absence his hospital was looted; part of the building was torn down for fuel, and his scientific apparatus were destroyed or carried off. In time, as the Communist power became more firmly established and political feeling abated, the doctor was released. Back he went to his hospital and courageously set to work to convert a mass of wreckage into an institution of service. There the A.R.A. found him in a building that was a hospital in name only, ministering as he could, with the primitive equipment he had been able to improvise, to the suffering around him. It was the privilege of the A.R.A. to be the agent by which ultimately this fine courage was rewarded. The form of that reward, needless to say, was neither a citation, nor a medal, but drugs, blankets, surgical implements, everything in fact which was required to restore this institution from a state of destitution as acute as that of its patients, to full strength and effectiveness.

#### EPIDEMICS AND FAMINE DISEASES <sup>7</sup>

The advance of medical science has practically eradicated typhus and relapsing fevers, cholera and smallpox, and has brought typhoid under control in all civilized states except Russia. There these diseases were still endemic-epidemic, and along with malaria, bubonic plague, and trachoma, continued even before the war, to exact their yearly toll.<sup>8</sup> The conditions arising from foreign and civil wars, the breakdown of sanitary equipment and such regulations as existed, the vast movements of political and famine refugees, housing shortage and general undernourishment contributed to spread disease, while the weapons of combating it, medicines and organization, became, as we have seen, increasingly ineffective. Most of these epidemics followed the same general curve of incidence. There was a sharp increase beginning at the time of the Revolution and continuing during the unregulated demobilization of the

<sup>7</sup> *O golode*, Vypusk 1. A. V. Palladin, *Fiziologiya Pitanii*. D. P. Grinev, *Patologiya Golodaniia*. Kharkov, izdanie otdela medits. i sanit. prosv. NKZ.

<sup>1932.</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Typhus has averaged 82,497 cases yearly during the last two decades; relapsing fever from 10,544 to 128,728; smallpox over 110,775. L. Tarassévitch, *Epidemics in Russia since 1914*, Geneva, 1922. A report to the Health Committee of the League of Nations.

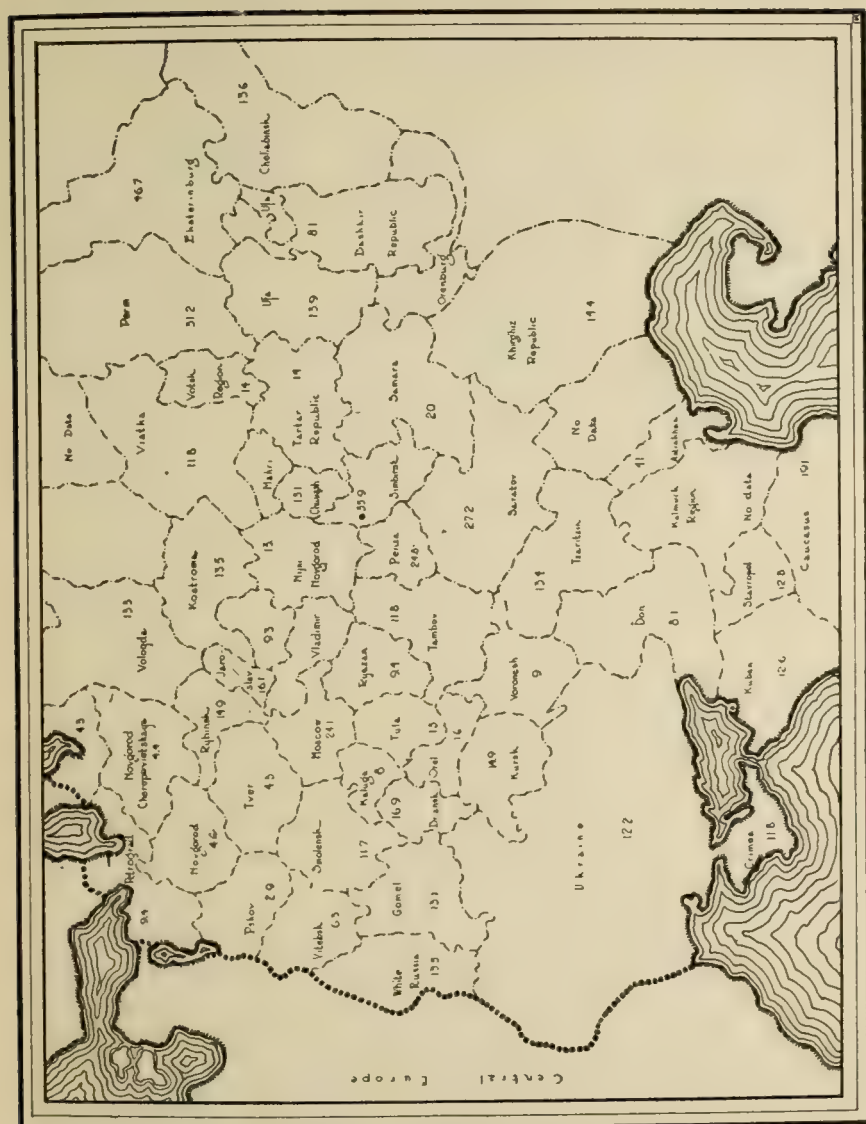


armies and the civil wars of 1918-20. The peak was reached in the winter of 1918-20. The winter of 1920-21, a period, comparatively, of peace, brought a decline which was of brief duration. With the crop failure of 1921 began the second epidemic wave, which was in full tide when the A.R.A. arrived in Russia.

As devastating in its progress as the epidemics, tuberculosis had shown an even more deadly consistency in its progress since 1914. The struggle against this disease had made some progress before the war, thanks chiefly to private efforts. The war curtailed the activities of the anti-tuberculosis organizations, and with the Revolution they disappeared, the control of their sanatoria and their other functions being absorbed by a bureau of the Commissariat of Health. The bureau evolved plans, requiring extensive means that were altogether lacking. Politics became involved with the anti-tuberculosis work, as it did with everything else, affecting both technical management and propaganda, which now proclaimed that this—a worker's disease—could be eradicated only by the complete annihilation of capitalism, its social cause. Statistics of the disease, reliable only as indicating a tendency, confirmed the experience of physicians in various parts of the country, who reported a steady increase until the year 1921, when an apparent decrease occurred. This was no occasion for optimism, however, for the decrease was attributed to the fact that many afflicted with and weakened by tuberculosis became victims of the epidemics that swept the country in the wake of the famine.

Of another character were the deficiency diseases which developed as the food supply diminished and spread with sudden virulence, especially among children, when the crops failed. Among these were rickets, prevalent before the war; scurvy, which was rare; and hunger edema, the "swelling from hunger," a familiar feature of all famine "horror" pictures.

Deriving from the same source as the deficiency diseases, i.e., from hunger, were manifestations of mental abnormality, the symptoms of which were sometimes a dull, dazed apathy, and sometimes the raving fury of a maniac. These diseases



### Epidemic Diseases in Russia.

Typhus, Relapsing Fever and Cholera Cases per 1,000 Population,  
January to August, 1922

The figures include only cases officially reported and are a considerable understatement of the actual incidence of these diseases.

are held chiefly accountable for cannibalism and necrophagia, the most revolting of the whole catalogue of famine horrors.<sup>9</sup>

### THE A.R.A. MEDICAL PROGRAM

With a medical famine of such proportions, with the forces for combating disease so disorganized, with epidemics in full flood, Dr. Beeuwkes and his associates were in the position where anything they might do would serve an urgent need. But since both resources and energy were limited, they had to decide at what points and in what manner the help they could give might be most effectively applied, first, in checking the spread of disease, and second, in the treatment of the sick. Beeuwkes first applied to the Commissariat of Health for information and suggestion. Dr. Semashko, the Commissar, and his assistants immediately displayed a willingness to assist the A.R.A. and to coöperate with it, which they maintained throughout the medical relief work. At no time did the Medical Division encounter any serious troubles of purely official origin. Here and there an incompetent political appointee caused local troubles, but these cases were rare and unimportant. But with the best of intentions, the health officials could not supply reliable information, which was, as Beeuwkes has observed, as scarce as medical supplies.<sup>10</sup> This necessitated personal investigation by the Medical Division staff, which at first had to be limited, since distances were great, travel incredibly slow, and time extremely important.

\* "In connection with food shortage, the investigations of Professor Frank, Chief of the Department of Mental and Nervous Diseases of Kharkov University, concerning the mental abnormalities of reported cases of cannibalism are of interest. His work to date has covered the gubernias of Odessa, Donetsk, Zaporozh, Nikolaiev, and Ekaterinoslav, where he has run down all rumored cases of cannibalism. He was able to establish the authenticity of twenty-six cases in which humans were killed and eaten by their murderers. He found seven cases in which murder was committed and the bodies sold for pecuniary gain. In these latter the flesh was disguised in sausage form and placed on the open market. The practice of necrophagia he found very common in all districts." Henry Beeuwkes, "Report of the Medical Division, A.R.A. Russian Unit," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXIX, 37.

<sup>10</sup> The effect of unreliable information is illustrated by the case of ethyl alcohol which Beeuwkes deleted from his early requisitions sent to America on the strength of official assurance that the commodity was produced in Russia and easily obtainable. Contact with medical institutions soon showed that if ethyl alcohol existed in Russia, the majority of institutions could not and did not get it until it was imported by the A.R.A.



Even personal investigations were seriously handicapped by administrative confusion and inefficiency. Beeuwkes illustrates this by his experience in Novorossisk. The head of the local health department gave him a list of the medical institutions of the city, which included five hospitals and several children's homes. This official, however, was able to take Beeuwkes to only two of the hospitals listed, for two had been closed and abandoned, while the other had mysteriously disappeared. Subsequently the Americans discovered the largest hospital in the city, of which there had been no sign on the health official's list. Such official information as existed, supplemented by the investigations of Drs. Beeuwkes and Davenport, and the inspections of the District Supervisors already established, were sufficient as the basis for the first requisitions and for the making of two important decisions of policy.

The first of these related to methods of combating the vermin borne diseases that were sweeping across the famine regions into central and western Russia, and even threatening to pass on into neighboring states. The plan first considered was a vast delousing campaign throughout the whole Volga region, for which a large number of disinfectors, bathing apparatus, and replacement clothing were to be imported. Investigation showed, however, that this would never do, since the existing delousing and bathing equipment was not being used, because of the inertia of officials, the lack of fuel, and even of water. Therefore, instead of disinfectors, the A.R.A. imported and distributed large quantities of soap, sulphur, and similar disinfectants which could be employed by individual institutions. A few disinfectors were imported for special purposes presently described.

The second decision related to treatment of the sick. It would have been possible for the A.R.A. to have established throughout the country a number of hospitals and other institutions completely equipped and under American management to serve as models and to provide free treatment to the limit of their capacity. This had become a familiar policy in post war medical relief. In the Russia of 1921-22, it was obvious that models, as such, were useless, since the country was so destitute that no institution could hope to imitate them.

Furthermore, the number of persons needing treatment was so vast and so scattered over a great territory that the supplies, if concentrated in model institutions, would be available to relatively few. The policy adopted was to distribute supplies as broadly as possible to existing institutions, and incidentally to use these supplies to bring about any such improvement in administration and equipment as the means at the disposal of health officials would permit.

On the basis of these decisions the Medical Division planned a campaign along the following lines:

First—For the prevention of disease:

Cleanup, bathing, and inoculation campaigns.

Distribution of disinfectants and disinfecting apparatus.

Purification and repair of urban water supply systems.

Second—For the treatment of disease:

Distribution of all essential supplies to as many as could be reached by existing hospitals, dispensaries, feldsher points, laboratories, children's homes, et cetera.

The organization of new ambulatories and dispensaries where none existed, or where additional ones were needed.

Third—Supplementary to strictly medical relief and as a part of the major feeding operations:

Food issues to patients and inmates of homes.

Food and clothing relief to medical personnel (by the Food Remittance System).

Fourth—Distribution of medical literature to universities and other institutions.

On these lines the Medical Division began its work in November, 1921, in the A.R.A. districts of Kazan, Samara, Moscow, and Petrograd. In December the work spread to Simbirsk, Saratov, Tzaritzin, and Orenburg, and in January 1922, to the gubernias included in the Ufa-Urals District. During this month came the news of the Congressional Appropriation of \$4,000,000 worth of medical supplies, which permitted an intensification of relief in the regions already being served, and expansion with the development of Food Remittances and mass relief in western Russia and the Ukraine. Thus by the spring of 1922, medical relief was reaching all

of European Russia, except the sparsely populated regions of the north and the non-famine provinces of central Russia. Later these central provinces were also supplied by the A.R.A. Sanitary Trains.<sup>11</sup>

The organization of the Medical Division and many aspects of medical relief have been described in the course of the main narrative of relief operations. The volume and varieties of supplies were given at the beginning of this chapter. Here we shall touch on only those features of the medical aid not previously described. Although all phases of this operation went on concurrently, it is convenient to treat them under the two broad classifications already employed; the prevention of disease, and its treatment.

### PREVENTION OF DISEASE

For the clean up campaigns and the rehabilitation of urban water supply systems, the principal requirements were initiative, labor, and technical supervision. The first and the last the Americans provided; the labor was the contribution of able bodied refugees who received American rations. The distribution by the Medical Division of a million pounds of chloride of lime to cities, and of large numbers of Lister bags to hospitals, insured an immediate effect in the water purification campaigns, which resulted in the decrease of typhoid and cholera. Bathing operations were designed primarily for the hygienic benefit of children attending A.R.A. kitchens. Thus the Moscow district provided free baths for all children attending the American kitchens. Odessa opened its campaign by giving a bath to 2,600 children, and disinfecting their clothing. Later the A.R.A. provided baths for other groups of the population. Samara, for example, conducted a bathing establishment which in one hundred days' operation gave free baths to 181,005 persons of the following groups: Children (inmates of homes and attending A.R.A. kitchens); manual and clerical workers of the city; the poor and unemployed (this was the largest group—102,222); students of Samara university and other schools. It is reasonable to attribute the remarkable

<sup>11</sup> Chapter XVI.



decrease in typhus in Samara between 1922 and 1923 to these and other sanitary measures of the A.R.A. The number of cases per thousand during two winter months were:

1922		1923	
January .....	19.00	January .....	.30
February .....	11.70	February .....	.22

Of special interest are the disinfecting stations established by the Medical Divisions at strategic points on the railways to prevent the spread of epidemics from Russia into the border states, and to keep new infection from crossing from Asiatic into European Russia. War refugees from the Baltic states were repatriated chiefly through the following points on the western borders: Sebesch, Minsk, Veliky-Luky, Vitebsk, Gomel, Bobrinsk, and Kiev. To these points the helpless people came in box cars which contained scant remnants of household possessions, and a mass of humanity, dressed in filthy rags, and bearing the germs of disease which ravaged the refugee ranks as the trains moved slowly westward. At the border all were held up, the dead and seriously ill were removed from the trains, and the rest were herded into unsanitary camps to await the completion of their papers. At Minsk, the most active evacuation point, the health authorities estimated that eighty per cent of the refugees developed typhus, which naturally spread among the local population and was carried across the border into Poland. The A.R.A. imported six French disinfecting cameras, and put them in operation at these border points. At Minsk, where refugees had been herded in vacant lots or in dilapidated buildings, the Medical Division organized a completely equipped one hundred bed hospital and a dispensary at the Kozerova camp. This assistance in organization and equipment not only improved the lot of the refugees, but gave great aid to officials on both sides of the border. Subsequently, as the border refugee movement diminished, the disinfecting equipment at two of these stations was removed, one sent to Petrograd to care for refugees there, and the other to Samara.

Through Samara pass the main railway lines from Siberia and Turkestan, and here was the chief portal of entry of dis-

ease from the east. At the Samara station, the A.R.A. organized and operated a dispensary for the examination and treatment of all refugees passing through that point. The records of that work are interesting:

Number of trains inspected .....	868
Patients removed from trains to dispensary .....	1,030
Patients removed from station to dispensary .....	2,427
Patients removed from dispensary to hospital .....	2,339
Dead bodies removed from trains and railroad stations	26
Total patients attended to .....	12,077
Prescriptions filled .....	75,000

Among the cases removed from trains and isolated, the following diseases predominated: malaria, typhus, influenza, diphtheria, scurvy, dysentery, syphilis, gonorrhea, smallpox, and various skin diseases.

A similar dispensary at the Kinel station treated and isolated cases of the same type coming from Siberia, in the following number:

Total number of patients treated in this dispensary...	5,456
Number of trains inspected .....	102
Sick removed from trains to dispensary .....	441
Dead bodies removed from trains .....	21

The culmination of the disease prevention work was the inoculation campaign, carried on throughout the greater part of Russia in the summer of 1922, and reinaugurated for children in the spring of 1923. For this campaign the Medical Division imported and distributed 7,000,000 cubic centimeters of tetra vaccine,<sup>12</sup> 1,000,000 doses of mono vaccine and 3,500,000 doses of smallpox vaccine. As soon as the vaccines reached Moscow from the Pasteur Institute of Paris, special couriers rushed them to the District Physicians, who sent their "inoculation companies," previously organized, through the towns and villages of their districts. The totals of this campaign are impressive: Tetra inoculations 6,873,214; smallpox vaccinations 1,590,136. These figures do not include vaccinations and inoculations against smallpox and typhoid fever carried out with American supplies by Russian doctors, previ-

<sup>12</sup> The tetra vaccine contained the following organisms per cubic centimeter: cholera, 4,000,000,000; typhoid, 1,800,000,000; para-typhoid A, 1,250,000,000; para-typhoid B, 1,250,000,000.

ous or subsequent to this A.R.A. campaign of the summer of 1922.

### THE TREATMENT OF DISEASE

In respect to the treatment of disease, the work of the Medical Division was primarily the distribution of supplies to existing institutions. This required an investigation of the institutions in the areas to which the District Physicians were assigned, for, though the needs of all were inclusive, institutions of different types and in different localities had special requirements. This distribution naturally gave the Americans an opportunity to promote administrative efficiency by encouraging the able, by withholding supplies where they would be misused, and by bringing pressure to bear on officials to support institutions to the extent of their means. Beginning with thirty-six institutions in November 1921, practically all accessible institutions in the relief districts had received one or more issues of supplies by September 1922. At the end of the first year the A.R.A. had reached 12,383 institutions. By June, the number had reached the total, 16,419.

The wide variety of supplies furnished has been shown; it will be interesting here to list some of the special and expensive equipment distributed: Albee bone sets, Hudson trephines, cystoscopes, electric ophthalmoscopes, complete X-ray equipment, radiographic tubes and plates to institutions with X-ray machines which they could not use for lack of tubes and plates. The Roux Laboratory at Samara was completely supplied by a special purchase of equipment which restored it to use for the production of sera and vaccines. Other laboratories received stains, reagents, culture media, sugar needed in bacteriological analysis, hemocytometers, hemoglobinometers, urinometers, autoclaves, sterilizers, microscopes and so forth. These, of course, were not only of great immediate value—in fact absolutely unobtainable for the majority of Russian institutions—but of continuing value, long after the medicines, soap, and other expendable supplies had been used up.

Besides helping the existing institutions, the A.R.A. found it possible to establish dispensaries giving free treatment, and pharmacies providing free medicines, to the thousands in need



of these things but lacking the means to pay for them. Brief descriptions of a few of these, from Dr. Beeuwkes' report, will indicate the variety of functions they performed:

**Moscow Central Dispensary.**—This institution comprised fifteen departments: Therapeutic, Pediatric, Surgical, Nervous, Gynecological, Venereal, Urological, Ear, Nose and Throat, Eye, Dental, Psychiatric, Laboratory and Pharmacy. The daily capacity was about five hundred prescriptions and the various departments could handle upwards of three hundred patients daily. Children's homes were supplied from this dispensary. About 1,200 prescriptions for students were filled monthly. The remainder of the patients were American Relief Administration Russian Employees, the unemployed and invalids. The Dental Department had four dentists, who handled about fifteen patients daily. The highest number of prescriptions filled in a single month was 14,000. This organization was turned over to the Bureau of Unemployment, who will continue to operate it for the unemployed.

The American Relief Administration Headquarters Dispensary treated a maximum of 1,000 patients a month mainly, but not exclusively, employees of the American Relief Administration.

**Kiev City.**—The first dispensary was organized in Kiev City in May, 1922, treating twenty patients the first day and between 140 and 170 daily after the first few weeks. It made 300 inoculations per day during the American inoculation campaign. The need for medical relief of this kind was so great in Kiev that Dr. Foster established three other dispensaries in different parts of the city. During the latter months each of the four averaged 170 treatments daily. A Roentgen cabinet for radiographic diagnosis, a laboratory for analysis and a dental dispensary were also established, the latter being one of the finest and best equipped in the city of Kiev, and the first free dental dispensary organized in that town. The number of patients treated in these dispensaries totalled 121,271 and the number of prescriptions issued 107,032. A dispensary was also organized at Vinnitsa, treating daily from forty to fifty patients. This organization was turned over to the Joint Distribution Committee at the close of our program to continue its operation.

**Simbirsk.**—The American Relief Administration established twenty-two dispensaries, pharmacies and other organizations

in the Simbirsk district, treating or providing medicines for an average of 2,574 patients daily. Most of these were for the treatment of general cases, but a large malaria station was organized at Penza and is at present treating 250 malaria cases each day. Dr. Godfrey also organized a laboratory at Russaevka for railroad hospitals of the Moscow-Kazan Railroad. This was the only institution of its kind within a wide radius. Another laboratory was organized in Simbirsk city, at the Children's Hospital, to take care of this institution and the various local children's homes. Most of these organizations will continue to operate as they were well supplied at the termination of our program. . . .

Ufa.—A large pharmacy was organized in the city of Ufa to care for patients, who passed through city ambulatories but were unable to secure medicines, as well as to provide for the needs of all children's homes. A similar pharmacy was established at Sterlitamak, and these two organizations provided medicines for a maximum of 250 patients daily. Ambulatories were also organized in Ufa and Ekaterinburg, treating a maximum of 250 patients each day.

Rostov/Don.—The American Relief Administration pharmacy at Novtcharkask provided medicines for 300 patients a day. Two malaria stations established at Rostov, treated over 300 malaria cases daily. A pharmacy was also organized at Rostov to take care of the needs of eighty-five children's homes there.

This brief chapter scarcely does justice to the remarkable achievements of the Medical Division, which make up a story of great technical and human interest. Here we have given only the outlines of a work which in spite of its vastness has been overshadowed by other departments of Russian relief.

The A.R.A. Medical program did not, of course, restore medical practice and health organization in Russia to its pre-war standard. It did, however, by its timely and extensive aid stop the process of deterioration and save Russian institutions from being completely overwhelmed by the wave of disease that swept on its destructive course in the wake of war and famine. By achieving this, the medical branch of the relief operation saved the lives of thousands already stricken, and other thousands who were doomed to suffer if the wave of disease was unchecked.

## CHAPTER XIX

### REPATRIATION AND REFUGEE RELIEF

#### REPATRIATION OF AMERICAN CITIZENS <sup>1</sup>

BY PARAGRAPH XXVII of the Riga Agreement, the Soviet Government agreed to permit American citizens in Russian territory to leave it if they wished to do so. This clause applied not only to several persons held in prison by the Soviet authorities on various charges, chiefly political, but to other American citizens who had been unable to secure permission to leave the country or, because of the absence of American consular officials, had been unable to establish their citizenship. And there were many in these two latter classes who had been practically cut off from friends and relatives in America, and had no way of reaching them, even if allowed to leave Russia. Assistance to such persons was strictly no part of the business of relief as carried on by the A.R.A., yet many were in great need of just such help. The Soviet Government had fulfilled the first part of its obligation under Article XXVII, by announcing in the press that Americans, upon the establishment of their citizenship, would be free to leave Russia. It was clearly incumbent on some American agency to furnish such aid as under normal diplomatic relations would have been provided by consular agents, and the Directors of the A.R.A. were glad to authorize the Russian Unit to act in this matter in coöperation with the State Department's representative in Latvia. The A.R.A., of course, had nothing to do with the decisions relative to citizenship claims other than to instruct claimants how to proceed and to forward their papers. Its function was to assist American citizens who wished to leave Russia in every way possible in conformance to the under-

<sup>1</sup> This account of repatriation of American citizens is based on John A. Lehrs' "The Liaison Division's Repatriation Work," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XL, 1-11.



standing with the Soviet authorities. The work of repatriation was based on Article XXVII of the Riga Agreement and was regulated in its detail by an executive memorandum of the New York office, dated October 11, 1921.

It fell to the Liaison Division of the Russian Unit to handle the repatriation cases. In the beginning, however, this Division, established September 22, 1921, under Professor A. C. Coolidge, was intended to provide the channel of liaison with the Soviet Government, with other missions, and with the press, Russian and foreign. The appointment by the Soviet Government of the Plenipotentiary Representative in relief matters, who dealt directly with the Director of the Unit, tended to deprive this Division of its liaison functions. The establishment of the Communications Division on January 30, 1922, to handle press relations left the Liaison Division chiefly occupied with repatriation cases which had been referred to it by the Director on the strength of the memorandum of October 11, 1921, referred to above.

As soon as the news spread that the A.R.A. was prepared to facilitate repatriation, applications for assistance began to come, both to the New York office and to the Liaison Division in Russia. In the majority of cases the persons concerned were the wives and minor children of Russian and Ukrainian Jews who had emigrated to the United States and had acquired citizenship there. According to the United States' laws, previous to the statute of September 22, 1922, citizenship was automatically extended to these wives and minor children. The chief obstacle to their repatriation was the conflict between Russian and American citizenship laws. Although the Soviet Government had annulled all laws of previous Russian régimes, including Article 325 of the Criminal Code which penalized the expatriation of Russian citizens without the personal sanction of the Czar, the authorities, in the absence of new legislation on the subject, took the position that a Russian could not change his citizenship except by marriage to an alien.<sup>2</sup> They,

<sup>2</sup>At this time (1921-1922) the only references to the abandonment or acquirement of citizenship in Soviet Laws were these: Article 103 of the *Code of Laws Regarding Documents of Civil Statutes, Marital, Family and Trustee Rights* states that in case of the marriage of persons owing allegiance to two different countries, one party has the right to acquire the citizenship of the

therefore, attempted to restrict the right of leaving Russia to native born American citizens. But Litvinov, the Assistant Commissar of Foreign Affairs, had at Riga approved a tentative list of repatriants, which included both native born and nationalized American citizens. From this precedent, the A.R.A. argued that the Soviet Government should permit the departure of all persons whose American citizenship had been established by the Government of the United States. After negotiations, the authorities acceded to the A.R.A. position, verbally agreeing to allow the departure from Russia of all persons whom the United States claimed as citizens, but reserving the right to claim as their nationals American citizens of Russian birth. This reservation was never applied to any of the A.R.A. cases, and throughout the whole period the Soviet Government observed strictly and fully all its obligations under this arrangement. In the few cases where local officials refused American citizens permission to leave the territory under their jurisdiction, the central authorities always upheld the A.R.A. appeal.

Once at the very end of the operation the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs indicated, at the expense of the A.R.A. and the repatriation cases, its displeasure that the United States held diplomatically aloof. No longer, said the Foreign Office—formally—would it recognize citizenship letters issued by the consul at Riga. Informally, it clearly stated that since the United States declined to establish a consulate in Russia, Russia was not inclined to accept documents from a consul stationed in another country. Thus the stage was set for trouble, for the A.R.A. could not hope that the American Government would for such a cause depart from its policy of abstaining from diplomatic relations with Russia. Long and perhaps fruitless negotiations between the Liaison Division and the Foreign Office would have been inevitable had the A.R.A. remained longer in Russia. As it was, the relief work

other. Article 20 of the *Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic* establishes the right of local soviets to grant Russian citizenship to aliens of the proletarian class residing in Russia. Article 49, paragraph "p," of this constitution confers on the All Russian Central Executive Committee the right to issue regulations governing the acquirement and loss of Russian citizenship.

was at this time in liquidation and the best the Liaison Division could do was to ask the Foreign Office to recognize the citizenship papers in the seventy-five pending cases, where citizenship had been established. This the Soviet authorities agreed to do on the eve of the American withdrawal.

The actual work of the Division consisted in receiving and forwarding evidence of citizenship presented by claimants, in locating persons whose citizenship had been established in America, in following up cases with the various government departments concerned, in securing visas from the Latvian Mission in Moscow, and in issuing funds to the repatriants in need of them, when authorized to do so after the deposit of funds had been made by relatives with the State Department or with the A.R.A.

Among the three hundred and seventy-six cases handled by the Division there was a great variety of situations involving all sorts and conditions of men, women, and children. A case which illustrates certain phases of the repatriation work, as well as the capacity of an organization that worked largely in terms of thousands and even millions of people to take every care in helping individuals, is the story of Dmitri. He was a boy of twelve, whose parents, going off to America in 1912, had left him in an Odessa orphanage. In 1922 Dmitri's parents asked the A.R.A. to find their boy and send him to them. At the Odessa orphanage there was no sign of Dmitri. He had, it appeared, like many others, been affected by the revolutionary spirit. At any rate he had broken with authority and left for parts unknown. Finding Dmitri, now at large in Russia, was like finding the needle in a haystack, for there were thousands of little boys like him, migrating with the seasons from town to town, begging and stealing rides on trains, living in cellars and abandoned buildings for all the world like little animals. Nevertheless, an advertisement for information as to the youngster's whereabouts brought the news that Dmitri had gone with his uncle Vladimir to Baltsky. After some difficulty the A.R.A. found Uncle Vladimir only to learn that Dmitri had gone on to Kiev with another uncle. Thereupon, the Kiev office of the A.R.A. took up the quest. A few days later Dmitri himself appeared at the Kiev office,



ragged, hungry, and forlorn. The last of the uncles, it developed, had suddenly felt called upon to leave town, leaving Dmitri in the streets with no food and no money. Then Dmitri heard that the A.R.A. was looking for him and came to find out why. From then on it was rather like a fairy tale. He was clothed, fed and cared for until his papers were completed. Then, in company with the A.R.A. courier, Dmitri traveled to Riga, where he was put on the ship that took him to his parents in America.

In another case an American citizen residing in Paris asked the A.R.A. to find his son who had disappeared after the death of his Russian mother. This led the Liaison Division found in the Russian navy into which he had been conscripted when he was unable to produce his mother's American passport and from which the authorities refused to release him after the passport had been recovered. It took nearly eleven months to get this boy out of the navy and out of the country. Of quite a different character was the case of an American dentist who had been practicing in Russia for thirty-five years. The revolution deprived him of his practice, his savings, and most of his professional equipment. The dentist was too old to begin again in the new Russian world, but through the intervention of the Liaison Division was able to return to America where life was easier.

There were many requests for help which came to the Division that had no relation to repatriation. Wherever it was possible, within the terms of the agreements with the Soviets, the help was given. Of particular importance was the aid given in locating the beneficiaries of American War Risk Insurance policies, parents of American soldiers killed in the war. There were other cases which grew out of the belief that the A.R.A. could and should undertake all sorts of private commissions. A doctor leaving Russia lost all his papers including his medical diploma. He asked the A.R.A. to get him a duplicate. A woman in Russia wished the A.R.A. to compel her husband in America to send for her. Another woman reported to a representative of the Liaison Division that she had heard that her husband in America had married another woman. She insisted that the A.R.A. investigate and if the

report were true, take legal action against her bigamous spouse. This woman never was convinced that the discipline of faithless husbands was beyond the scope of the A.R.A.'s activities.

The Liaison Division handled 376 repatriation cases representing 798 persons. Nearly every one of these cases was a long drawn out affair, involving searches by the A.R.A. District Supervisors, innumerable interviews with applicants and officials, the writing of many letters, the issue of traveling funds,<sup>3</sup> and in one case the purchase of a whole outfit of clothing for a determined woman who refused to be repatriated until she was properly dressed for the part. During the period of the Liaison Division's operations, the Soviet Government changed its regulations governing the departure of persons from the country three times. This caused confusion and delay. But the greatest delays came from the applicants themselves, whose lives of darkness and misery had left them little capacity for dealing with papers such as the officials required. Without the personal aid of American and Russian representatives of the A.R.A. a large proportion of the cases would never have been successfully completed.

The liquidation of the Russian Unit brought the repatriation work to an end on June 1, 1923.

#### RELIEF OF RUSSIAN REFUGEES: CONSTANTINOPLE

During the period covered by this book the A.R.A. undertook the administration of relief to Russian refugees outside of Russia. This refugee work had no relation to the major Russian relief operations other than that it was directed by the A.R.A. and that the beneficiaries were of the Russian people. The funds used in these activities were distinct from those employed in Soviet Russia and were donated and earmarked for this special purpose.

The most serious Russian refugee problem was at Constantinople. Here came the battered remnants of the defeated

<sup>3</sup> Funds issued by the Liaison Division on authorization of the Department of State or the New York office of the A.R.A. amounted to \$24,461.23. These funds were issued, in accordance with an agreement with the Russian Government, in soviet rubles.

counter-revolutionary armies of Denikin and Wrangel along with thousands of panic stricken civilians, men, women, and children, penniless, ragged, and ill. The first wave came in February 1920, after Denikin's retreat through the Ukraine. In that month General Schilling, commanding the left wing of the White Army, fell back on Odessa and began the evacuation of his troops by ship to the Crimea and to Novorossisk. A panic in Odessa followed. Mobs rushed the ships moored at the docks until every available inch was occupied. Crammed with this panic stricken human freight the ships put out and after weathering a terrific blizzard on the Black Sea brought these refugees, numbering about ten thousand, to Constantinople. There they were taken care of in refugee camps established on the Princes' Islands by representatives of Great Britain, France, Italy, and the United States.<sup>4</sup> The second wave came in March 1920 when Denikin finally gave up the struggle at Novorossisk. Some of Denikin's men went to the Crimea where Wrangel was organizing the last of the futile drives against the Bolsheviks; others with their families—altogether about fifty thousand souls—came to the Constantinople area.

The last and largest wave came in November after the Wrangel defeat at Perekop. The French, who had played an important part in the Wrangel adventure, agreed to take the primary obligation for the care of such refugees as landed under their auspices. There were about 135,000 thus handled by the French, and 50,000 others. The American Red Cross organizations continued to look after the refugees not otherwise cared for and in addition contributed over \$530,000 worth of supplies to the refugee camps set up by the French at Gallipoli, Lemnos, and Tchataldja.<sup>5</sup>

During 1920-21 practically all the Russians in the three

<sup>4</sup> The American work was under the general direction of Rear Admiral Mark L. Bristol, High Commissioner of the United States, and Major C. Claflin Davis, Secretary of the Constantinople Chapter of the American Red Cross. Coöperating with the latter was the "Constantinople Unit" of the A.R.C., which continued its operations in this region until the summer of 1921. C. Claflin Davis, "Final Report—Being a Brief History of the Chapter's Activities from Its Organization in 1911 to November, 1923," in *Monthly Bulletin*, No. 22, Constantinople Chapter, American Red Cross, January and February, 1924, pp. 3-23.

<sup>5</sup> C. C. Davis, *op. cit.*, 9.



French camps were evacuated, principally to Serbia and Bulgaria. Some went to Brazil, but in a few months were back again in Constantinople where there remained some 27,000 refugees, about half of whom could neither support themselves nor get away to other countries where they could be absorbed. In March (1921) the French Government announced that it had spent over 200,000,000 francs for the care of Russian refugees and that its subsidies would cease on April 1.<sup>6</sup> A few months later (October 1921) the A.R.C. withdrew its "Constantinople Unit" and the very considerable task of caring for several thousand dependent persons was left on the hands of a number of local committees, Russian, American, and British, without adequate financial support.<sup>7</sup> By the spring of 1922 some of these committees had exhausted all their funds and were running into debt, while others had resources to last only until July 1. The League of Nations through its High Commissioner for Refugees, Dr. Nansen, had taken cognizance of the situation and had reported on the necessity of evacuation. This recognition of the situation, shared by all in touch with it, did not solve the problem. Appeals, therefore, went out to charitable organizations in America, among them the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, which asked the A.R.A. to make an investigation and submit recommendations.

A. C. Ringland, Chief of the A.R.A. Mission to Czecho-Slovakia, made the investigation in March and on the basis of his report the A.R.A. recommended that the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial make an appropriation for the feeding

<sup>6</sup> *The Daily Telegraph* (London), March 28, 1921.

<sup>7</sup> As a result of the initiative of Admiral Bristol an international committee supported almost entirely by British and American funds was formed as the "Constantinople Relief Fund." At its head was Colonel Proctor, an official of the Imperial Ottoman Bank. The "Bristol Disaster Relief Committee" was organized as a coördinating agency of American efforts and included representatives of the Constantinople Chapter of the A.R.C., the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., the Mennonite Relief, the Near East Relief, and the American Committee for the Rescue and Education of Russian Youth (known as the Whittemore Committee). Eighty-four Russian organizations were grouped around the "Central United Committee for Russian Refugees," which secured its principal resources from the A.R.C., the British Save the Children Fund, and the Constantinople Relief Fund, with such support as Russian organizations in Paris were able to raise. The Russian organizations are described in a pamphlet, *Russian Committee in Turkey; Materials Concerning the Evacuation of Russian Refugees from Constantinople*. Constantinople, November, 1922.

of the dependent refugees for four months, beginning July 1, on condition that the League of Nations raise £30,000 to carry out the evacuation of these "dependents" during this period. The Memorial agreed to finance the feeding if the A.R.A. would administer it. At the meeting of the Council of the League on May 13, Ringland personally described the situation and the member states of the League were invited to subscribe to the fund.<sup>8</sup> The British immediately promised £10,000 and by the end of June other members of the League had raised the total to £17,500.<sup>9</sup> This fell short of the required amount by £12,500, but the American Red Cross came to the rescue and agreed to make up the deficit.

On July 3, 1922, Ringland established his office in Constantinople. On the 5th, the first ship load of relief supplies was discharged and on the 9th, the A.R.A. began feeding 9,866 refugees.<sup>10</sup> For this work the A.R.A. took over the feeding stations of the Constantinople Relief Fund and in addition established in Pera a large central kitchen with a modern bakery, built by the Germans, where bread and other food was prepared for distribution by motor truck to the feeding points. The coördination of the efforts of the eighty-four separate Russian organizations beginning with the three largest, the Union of Zemstvos, the Russian Red Cross, and the Union of Towns, and ending with the Union of Hunters and Fishers and the Society of Workless Pedagogues was one of the first and most important of the tasks of administration. This, however, was soon accomplished and these bodies performed important services in both feeding and evacuation work. The evacuation program, by which it was hoped to reduce the Russian colony in Constantinople to those who

<sup>8</sup> League of Nations. *Official Journal*. Minutes of the 18th Session of the Council, Fifth Meeting, May 13, 1922, 530-531, 612-616. Lord Balfour and Dr. Nansen especially urged favorable and prompt action by the League. Arthur Sweetser and Huntington Gilchrist, American members of the League Secretariat, conducted an active "lobby" in support of the proposal at the League headquarters.

<sup>9</sup> In addition to Great Britain the contributing nations were: Switzerland, 10,000 Swiss francs; China, 5,000 French francs; Brazil, £500; Belgium, 50,000 Belgian francs; Czecho-Slovakia, 500,000 Czech kronen; Japan, £3,000.

<sup>10</sup> The details of this operation on which this account is based are given by A. C. Ringland, "The Russian Refugee Problem in Constantinople," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXVII, 9-20, and "Russian Refugees in Constantinople," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXIV, 25-32. Also C. C. Davis, *op. cit.*, 11-16.

could be absorbed into the economic life of the city, lagged behind the plan. By November 1, when evacuation was to have been completed, the total number of Russians in the city had not been much reduced, for though over 9,000 had left during the year, others had continued to arrive in a steady stream from South Russia and the Caucasus. Political and economic factors complicated the situation. The Greek debacle in September 1922, followed by great shifts of population, affected the economic situation of the Russian refugees. The revival of Turkish nationalism under Mustapha Kemal which resulted, among other things, in the establishment of the authority of the Grand National Assembly of Angora in Constantinople, agitated the general diplomatic situation and particularly affected the political status of Russian refugees. The Angora Assembly had established treaty relations with Soviet Russia. As the Soviets were still suspicious of the refugees,<sup>11</sup> the Turkish Commander Rafet Pasha announced that Russian organizations and individuals without Soviet passports would no longer be permitted in Constantinople.

These political developments naturally would have accelerated the tempo of evacuation but for the fact that the Slav countries of Central Europe, Bulgaria, Jugo-Slavia, and Czecho-Slovakia, to which a majority of refugees had been sent, had nearly reached the point of saturation. The donation of a second \$50,000 by the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial enabled the A.R.A. to continue the feeding of those "wholly dependent" who remained on its lists. In the meantime negotiations were carried on with the Jugo-Slav, Bulgarian, and other governments and with the American State Department, looking to the evacuation of the refugees who remained and who desired to leave Constantinople. These efforts, coupled with those of the League of Nations and the A.R.C., accomplished between November 1, 1922, and May 1,

<sup>11</sup> In the summer of 1922, when Edgar Rickard was in Moscow, Kamenev remarked that he understood that the A.R.A. was feeding the enemies of Soviet Russia in Constantinople. Rickard replied that the A.R.A. was not interested in the political opinions of those to whose need it ministered. He also pointed out that the funds for the Constantinople action were wholly apart from those allocated to the relief of Soviet Russia and that the Soviet Government had no cause to be concerned either for the diversion of funds from famine relief or for the promotion of hostile political activity.



1923, the evacuation of over 20,000 which included all those on the A.R.A. lists and for whom it had assumed responsibility. On May 1, the A.R.A. feeding ceased. There still remained a number of Russians who had been able to support themselves but unable to earn enough to pay their passage to another country. The A.R.A. (acting for the Memorial), the A.R.C., and the League of Nations made an agreement under which 1900 "selected" refugees were sent to America, the expense being borne by the three organizations, which appropriated \$23,000, \$35,000 and \$17,000 respectively for this purpose. Part of these refugees came to the United States, part went to Canada, the Russian Refugee Relief Society of New York assisting the refugees on their arrival to find employment.

The A.R.A. connection with the Constantinople refugee work ceased on July 1, 1923. The problem of Russian refugees in Europe had been by no means solved, but the extremely critical situation in Constantinople had been met.

#### OTHER REFUGEE RELIEF

The efforts of the A.R.A. Russian Unit to improve the lot of the members of the Polish race who were repatriated in 1921-1922 ceased at the Russian border.<sup>12</sup> Needless to say the troubles of the repatriants did not end at that point. From December 1921 to May 1922, about 30,000 crossed the line into Poland each month and of these from twenty-five to thirty per cent were children under fifteen years of age. The Polish Government, assisted by various private organizations, did what it could to care for these returned citizens until they could take care of themselves. But the children presented a special problem. Many were ill, and practically all were undernourished and needed special foods. These the A.R.A., through its Polish Mission, was able to assist through the operation of children's kitchens and the support of institutions in the towns of Baranowicze, Rowno, Sarny, Dorohusk, and Bialystok where, during the months while the refugee flow continued, 150,000 children were fed.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Chapter XVIII.

<sup>13</sup> P. S. Baldwin, "Poland's Refugee Problem," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXIX, 58-67.

Reference has been made to the expulsion of a number of scholars, writers, scientists, and others by the Soviet Government in the summer of 1922, as a part of the Communist battle against the revival of bourgeois ideology.<sup>14</sup> Many of these men, whose only crime was their refusal to abandon their critical and hostile attitude towards Communist theory and practice, arrived in Germany with no means to support themselves and their families until they could find employment of one sort or another. As a measure of temporary aid, Dr. Vernon Kellogg raised a fund of \$1,200 which was administered by Gardner Richardson, then in charge of A.R.A. intelligentsia relief in Austria and Poland.

<sup>14</sup> Page 293, footnote 3.

## CHAPTER XX

### AFFILIATED RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS

SOME indication of the important part played in Russian relief by societies and other bodies affiliated with the A.R.A. has appeared in the course of the preceding narrative. Many aspects of their work have necessarily been omitted. Here the attempt is not to tell the full story of these coöperating bodies, since this book is primarily concerned with the A.R.A., but to summarize briefly their characteristic activities, emphasizing especially those which have not been previously touched upon.

The terms of the European Relief Council agreement which regulated the relations between the A.R.A. and affiliated organizations were of a general nature,<sup>1</sup> the details of distribution being adapted to suit the program of the individual organization. Several of these organizations later made separate agreements with the Soviet Government in order to carry on special phases of their work after the famine, when the A.R.A. withdrew. In all cases, however, during the period of affiliation, the administrative machinery of the A.R.A., centering in New York, London, and Moscow, was utilized for the purchase, insurance and transport (sea and land) of supplies, and for the conduct of negotiations with various governments regarding relief matters. This made for greater efficiency and economy in large scale purchase and transport. The various methods of distribution can be most conveniently described as they were developed by each organization.

#### THE AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE (QUAKERS)

The A.F.S.C. had behind it a long record of achievement in relief before the Russian famine of 1921. During the war

<sup>1</sup>For the part played by the affiliated societies in the mobilization of relief funds and the general relation of these societies to the A.R.A., see Chapter VI. The text of the European Relief Council agreement is in Appendix A, Doc. II.



and afterwards the American Friends in conjunction with similar organizations of their faith in other countries had, under conditions of great difficulty, carried important aid to war sufferers of many nations. This work was international in character, as in origin, and was administered as an exemplification of the ideals of the Quaker faith. In 1919 and 1920, the A.F.S.C. was the agency through which the food supplies in children's relief, allocated to Germany by the A.R.A. in the course of its central European operations, were distributed to German children.<sup>2</sup> The Friends likewise carried on their own program in Germany, as well as in other Central European states, where they worked side by side with the A.R.A. In Austria, for example, children under three years of age were the special responsibility of the A.F.S.C., while the A.R.A. devoted its resources to children over three years old. Perhaps the chief characteristics which distinguish the relief work of the Friends from that of the A.R.A. are these: The Friends operated as an international organization and drew their administrative personnel from the countries participating in the provision of funds. The A.R.A. on the other hand was a strictly American enterprise. In the delivery of relief the Friends tended to support existing institutions, while the A.R.A. with greater funds at its disposal created new feeding organizations under American control in order to cover a wider field. These differences in technique were not rigidly maintained, for both bodies aided institutions and both operated open kitchens. The emphasis, however, was differently placed. This fact is mentioned because it was demonstrated in Russia.

The A.F.S.C. began relief work in Russia in 1916. It continued there through 1917 and 1918. After a break of fifteen months a Friends' Unit under Arthur Watts of the British, and Anna Haines of the American section entered Russia in 1920 and was at work at the time of the A.R.A.-Soviet negotiations of that year. Their work was conducted through Soviet Government institutions and supervised by British and American

<sup>2</sup> See D. R. Yarnall, "American Quaker Child Relief Mission to Germany," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, V, 24-30, and A. G. Scattergood, "German Child Feeding Mission (American Friends Service Committee)," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XVIII, 39-42. The work of the Anglo-American Friends unit in Poland is vividly described by J. M. Nankivell and S. Loch, *The River of a Hundred Ways*, London, 1925.

representatives. About \$550,000 worth of supplies were imported, \$115,000 coming from the J.D.C., \$100,000 from the A.R.C., and \$100,000 from the A.R.A. With the arrival of the A.R.A. in Russia in 1921, the Friends (American and British) took over the responsibility for the Buzuluk uyezd in Samara Gubernia, where they carried out their program in accordance with their own ideas and quite independent of the A.R.A., except in the matters of purchase and transportation of supplies and in relations with the Central Soviet Government.<sup>3</sup> Like other affiliated bodies, the American Friends had a representative, Murray S. Kenworthy, on Colonel Haskell's staff in Moscow. This arrangement continued until the A.F.S.C., wishing to resume its international status, withdrew from its relationship with the A.R.A., and made a separate agreement with the Soviet Government, and continued its work as a part of the international Quaker relief organization. During the period of affiliation the A.R.A. handled A.F.S.C. appropriations amounting to about \$415,000.

For the famine year 1921-1922, the program of the Friends called for the feeding of adults and children in Buzuluk and the administration of relief in Minsk supported by the J.D.C. The following year feeding was extended to the Pugachev uyezd, which made a much slower recovery than many other parts of Russia. This year, moreover, the Friends devoted a larger portion of their resources to reconstructive relief, notably in the purchase of horses for the peasants and by the importation of tractors.<sup>4</sup> The Friends continued their work in Russia after the withdrawal of the A.R.A., emphasizing reconstructive measures.

#### THE AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE

Like the A.F.S.C., the J.D.C. was engaged continuously in relief work during the war and throughout the hard years that followed. From 1914 to 1923 this organization raised

<sup>3</sup> This, of course, applied only to the American Friends. The international character of the Friends' work naturally created complications, and was one of several reasons for their separation from the A.R.A.

<sup>4</sup> The work of the Friends is described in *American Friends Service Committee (Quakers) Bulletins*, Nos. 37, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 52, 54, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60; a brief account is given by F. A. Mackenzie, *Russia before Dawn*, 133-138, London, 1923.

and appropriated for European relief \$63,000,000.<sup>5</sup> "Primarily the sums raised were collected by Jews from Jews for Jews," but the principle followed was that in time of famine distinctions of race and creed should not be the dominant consideration in the delivery of relief. This was notably true in the Russian work undertaken by the J.D.C. in affiliation with the A.R.A. Previous to its association with the A.R.A., the J.D.C. had expended \$5,750,000 in relief in Siberia and European Russia between August 1914 and the spring of 1921. At this point political and other conditions compelled the J.D.C. to discontinue its Russian activities until they could be renewed under the terms of the Riga and the European Relief Council Agreements.

The joint operations of the J.D.C. and the A.R.A.<sup>6</sup> in the Ukraine have already been described. The most important of the J.D.C.'s independent activities pertained to reconstructive relief. These, directed in Russia by Dr. Joseph Rosen, included the following: The importation of tractors; the purchase and distribution of pure bred seed corn; the purchase of live stock, farming implements, seeds, and plants; financial assistance to Jewish agricultural settlers; the support of traveling agricultural schools; the financing of land surveys; the re-establishment of coöperative loan societies; and the equipment and maintenance of trade schools. These varied operations, carried out in coöperation with the Jewish societies ORT and IKA, primarily for Jewish people, necessitated a separate agreement with the Soviet Government which was completed on December 11, 1922. This agreement was the basis on which the J.D.C. continued its reconstruction work after the liquidation of the Russian Unit of the A.R.A.

### THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

The war and post war relief work of the A.R.C. was too widespread and various and is too well known to be summarized here. It is sufficient to note that the work of these

<sup>5</sup> *The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee in Russia* (January, 1924), p. 3. The data relative to the J.D.C. activities given in this chapter are taken from this report.

<sup>6</sup> The J.D.C. also appropriated \$250,000 for non-sectarian relief by the A.F.S.C. in the Minsk area and \$50,000 in behalf of the Young Men's Hebrew Association to the Student Friendship Fund for student feeding.



years was a fitting continuation of that long record of service which has given the American Red Cross its unique place in the minds of the people of America and other nations.

In Russia, during the period under discussion, the A.R.C. furnished relief entirely through the Medical Division of the A.R.A.<sup>7</sup> At all times the advice and assistance of the experts of the A.R.C. in medical matters were cheerfully and generously given to the A.R.A. How important were the contributions of the A.R.C. and the extensive work which these contributions helped to make possible have been described in the earlier pages of this book.<sup>8</sup>

### BAPTIST RUSSIAN RELIEF

Baptist relief in Russia, carried on in affiliation with the A.R.A., included the maintenance of kitchens, the distribution of food packages to individuals, and the importation of considerable quantities of used clothing, which was distributed by the Baptist representatives, Dr. Everett Gill and Hoyt E. Porter, and the A.R.A. to the needy, regardless of their religious affiliations. Funds for this work were provided by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, supplemented by gifts from British Baptists. Food products and clothing were distributed in practically all A.R.A. districts, and seed grain was furnished to several sections through the Nansen Mission. On the liquidation of the A.R.A., the Baptists made an agreement with the Soviet Government for the continuation of their work, in which particular emphasis was to be placed on reconstruction.

### FEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AMERICA

An important aid in the mobilization of funds for Russian relief was the appeal made by the Federal Council through

<sup>7</sup> Chapters VI and XVIII.

<sup>8</sup> The records of the A.R.C. are to be found in the Annual Reports of the organization. Special phases of war and post war activities are fully described in: Henry Pomeroy Davison, *The American Red Cross in the Great War*, New York, 1920; John Van Schaick, *The Little Corner Never Conquered*, New York, 1922; Fisher Ames, Jr., *American Red Cross Work among the French People*, New York, 1921; C. M. Bakewell, *The Story of the American Red Cross in Italy*, New York, 1920.

the churches. Many to whom this appeal came contributed directly to the A.R.A. or the A.F.S.C. The Federal Council itself received over \$125,000, of which \$90,000 was administered through the A.R.A. remittance system for the benefit of the clergy, their dependents, and others connected with the Orthodox Church.<sup>9</sup> Those assisted by these funds constituted a particularly needy class who, at the time when this help came, were suffering not only from the hard conditions general in Russia, but also from the special hostility of the rulers of the country. The distribution of this relief was effected largely through the A.R.A. Food Remittance Division. The Federal Council's representative, the Rev. J. S. Zelig, was in Russia for a brief period to supervise distribution and report on conditions.

#### THE MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

This Committee was organized on July 27, 1920, to co-ordinate the activities of seven Mennonite relief bodies and to coöperate with a similar organization in Canada in sending funds and relief materials to the war sufferers in the Mennonite colonies of South Russia. Representatives of the Committee participated in the relief of refugees in Constantinople and planned to enter Russia from the south. This was at first impossible. Later, after negotiations with the Soviet authorities, the Mennonites arranged (October 1, 1921) to work in the famine campaign as the American Mennonite Relief, and it was this organization, under the direction in Russia of Alvin J. Miller, that became affiliated with the A.R.A. The Mennonite relief took various forms: mass feeding in open kitchens, which reached at the peak 35,000; food and clothing packages distributed to individuals to the extent of over \$180,000; clothing distribution, over \$240,000; refugee, transportation, and so forth, over \$160,000; reconstruction relief, about \$30,000. Altogether over one million dollars was used for Russian relief by the Mennonites during the period of affiliation with the A.R.A. A separate agreement with the

<sup>9</sup> Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, *Annual Report*, 1922, 13, 231. A brief account of this work is given by the Rev. J. S. Zelig, *The Russian Relief Work of the Federal Council of Churches*, New York, 1922.

Soviet Government was the basis of the important reconstruction activities of this organization, and this work was continued after the A.R.A.'s departure.<sup>10</sup>

### THE NATIONAL CATHOLIC WELFARE COUNCIL

The National Catholic Welfare Council was one of the original members of the European Relief Council, but did not establish its own organization in Russia, affiliated with the A.R.A., until March, 1922. An appeal from the Vatican for funds for Russian relief received such a generous response that the Catholic Mission was able to carry out a mass feeding program which reached 157,507 persons in the districts of Crimea, Orenburg, Moscow, Rostov/Don, and Krasnodar. In addition to this feeding, which was conducted without distinction as to race, religion, or politics, the Mission imported and distributed \$250,000 worth of textiles and medicines. Although the funds supporting the Catholic program came from Europe as well as America, the food purchases, amounting to about \$750,000, were all made in America by the A.R.A. in behalf of the National Catholic Welfare Council. \$20,000 in food packages were distributed to individuals by the Mission. The Catholics signed a separate agreement with the Soviet Government for the continuation of their work after July 1923.<sup>11</sup>

### THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL

The establishment of the A.R.A. in Russia enabled the National Lutheran Council (the Luthco as it was known) to extend its relief to members of the Lutheran faith eastward from Central Europe, where it had been at work since early in 1919. After a survey of the Russian situation by the Chairman of its European Commission, Dr. J. A. Morehead, the Luthco laid down a program calling for the expenditure of

<sup>10</sup> Levi Mumaw, "Mennonite Central Committee in Russian Relief," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXVI, 45-46.

<sup>11</sup> Edmund A. Walsh, "The Catholic Relief Mission," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXIX, 26-27. Dr. Walsh was the Director General of the Catholic Mission which was made up of Italians, Spaniards, Germans, Jugo-Slavs, Czecho-Slovaks, as well as Americans.



\$240,000 for the support of children's kitchens and the distribution of food packages to adults during a period of eight months. The A.R.A. handled the purchase, transport, and delivery of these commodities, as in the case of the other affiliated bodies. Representatives of the Luthco were included on Haskell's staff and were responsible for the supervision and direction of the Lutheran feeding and clothing distribution. The Luthco operations reached about one hundred and twenty-five parishes, including six hundred and fifty villages, in the following districts: Crimea, Ekaterinoslav, Elizabethgrad, Gomel, Kazan, Kharkov, Kiev, Minsk, Moscow, Odessa, Orenburg, Petrograd, Rostov, Tzaritzin, Samara, Saratov, Simbirsk, Ufa, Vitebsk. Something over \$1,000,000 was effectively used in this important work, during the period of affiliation with the A.R.A. The Luthco continued in Russia for some time after the A.R.A.'s withdrawal.<sup>12</sup>

#### STUDENT FRIENDSHIP FUND

Something has already been said of the situation of Russian teachers in these days of famine and political and economic confusion. The plight of students was no better. They could, perhaps, more easily than their teachers, readjust themselves to the moral shock of change, but they suffered from the same hard conditions of life, hunger, cold, and insecurity. These, combined with the deterioration and demoralization of universities and schools, made it as difficult for students to follow, as it was for teachers to lead, in educational work. Help came to the teachers in the manner already described.<sup>13</sup> Students likewise received generous and effective aid through the Student Friendship Fund, which is represented in America by the Council of Christian Associations (the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A.).

The opportunities for securing higher education in Czarist Russia were as far behind the standards of Western Europe as were the facilities for the treatment of disease. In 1914 there

<sup>12</sup> J. A. Morehead and C. T. Benze, "The National Lutheran Council's Relief Work in Russia," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XL, 49-52.

<sup>13</sup> Chapter XVI.

were eight universities within the present boundaries of Russia with an enrollment of slightly over 30,000. In addition there were other schools of higher education, Technological, Real, Cadet, Commercial, and Gymnasias, with an enrollment of about 700,000.<sup>14</sup> By 1922 the Soviets had increased the number of universities to eighteen, plus four special schools which might also be classed as universities. The registration in 1921-1922 in these institutions was 134,480.<sup>15</sup>

In the early days of the revolution the students received a bread ration, but this gradually dwindled as the food situation got worse, and after the adoption of the N.E.P. it was so greatly reduced that many of the students were forced to give up their university work. Nevertheless, in the spring of 1922 there were still about 100,000 students carrying on under the hardest conditions. At this time the government gave up the general rationing plan, establishing instead 30,000 scholarships, which did not go very far in view of the extent of the problem.

In January, E. T. Colton reached Moscow to make arrangements for student feeding. Negotiations with the government, undertaken with the coöperation of the A.R.A., resulted in an agreement signed late in March which provided that student feeding be managed in the same fashion as A.R.A. kitchens. The Student Friendship Fund had complete control and was free to utilize the administrative machinery of the A.R.A. in the cities where feeding was to be undertaken.

Student feeding under the direction of S. M. Keeny began in Moscow and Petrograd on April 20, 1922. Shortly afterwards Kazan was added to the list, to be followed in a few weeks by Odessa and other Ukrainian university centers. By arrangement the European Section of the Student Relief, which was organized in the summer of 1922 as a part of the Nansen Mission, undertook responsibility for student relief in university towns of Eastern Russia, the American Section being responsible for the western cities. The enrollment in these higher educational institutions in 1922-1923 was: under the American Section (A.R.A.), 110,331; non-American

<sup>14</sup> *Statesman's Year Book*, 1914, 1236-1237.

<sup>15</sup> S. M. Keeny, Director, American Section, European Student Relief, "The First Six Months of Student Feeding," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXXIII, 16-27.

(Nansen), 43,069; others, 31,537. The American feeding points were in Moscow, Petrograd, Kiev, Odessa, and Ekaterinoslav. By April 1923 the American feeding was 19,400 and the non-American section 11,900.

Like the A.R.A., the American Section of Student Relief, having established its feeding apparatus, was able to expand into other fields. One hundred thousand dollars was devoted to the assistance of professors through gifts of funds, clothing, fuel, and food, by the establishment of kitchens and sanatoria. With the great improvement of food conditions other needs of the university communities began to stand out and the American Section, therefore, diverted a part of its energies and resources to meet these new demands. In 1924-25 it purchased 18,000 Russian text books and placed them in the libraries of Moscow and Petrograd universities; it imported 69,603 other text books in the Russian language for general distribution to universities. These were primarily for students. For the use of professors, 657 German, French, and English scientific books and 292 periodicals in the same languages were imported and distributed. During this same period (after A.R.A. withdrawal) the Student Relief continued its feeding in Odessa and Kiev, established student clinics in Kiev, Khar'kov and Odessa, and carried out a general distribution of clothing to students and professors, besides special fuel and food relief to teachers in universities. The American Section withdrew from Russia in the spring of 1926.<sup>16</sup>

#### THE VOLGA RELIEF SOCIETY

This Society, which was organized by German groups of the United States and Canada, had a well defined purpose which it carried out with conspicuous success: "(To) Conduct Relief Work in Stricken German Colonies Located in Volga River District, Russia." These colonies had been planted in Russia by Catherine the Great, herself a German princess.

<sup>16</sup> This summary is based on the report of S. M. Keeny cited above. Also M. O. Dunham, "Student Feeding in Moscow," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XXVIII, 9-12, and unpublished reports by S. M. Keeny, Elizabeth Bredin, and O. J. Frederiksen, for which I am indebted to the Student Friendship Fund. A general survey of Student Relief is given by Ruth Rouse in *Rebuilding Europe, the Student Chapter in Post War Reconstruction*. London, 1925. Chapter XIII describes the Russian work.



Although they adopted many of the customs of the Russian villages that, like a vast sea, surrounded their little German island, the colonists retained the religion, language, and characteristics of their race. In the course of the years there had been a considerable emigration from the Volga colonies to our central and western states and the western provinces of Canada, and so when the days of famine came there were relatives and friends in America to send help.

The German colonies suffered from all the afflictions that beset the Volga districts. They were the scene of battles between Reds and Whites; they were disrupted by bitter political controversy; they were the object of the devastating attention of bandits; they were in the center of the area of drought. Hence, when the A.R.A. men established the relief district of Saratov, they found the colonists at the very end of their resources. A.R.A. kitchens in the colonies were among the first organized in the Saratov District.

In September, 1921, the Volga Relief Society sent its General Secretary, George Repp, to Russia as its representative with the A.R.A. Repp reached Saratov on September 14, and immediately went to work in the double capacity of representative of the Volga Relief Society and member of the A.R.A. Saratov staff as an organizer of feeding stations. The situation in the colonies (known under the Soviet régime as the Volga Labor Commune) was especially difficult, not only because of the desperate food shortage, but because of political and religious complications. Repp's tact, singleness of purpose, and great ability were responsible for the establishment of the work in the colonies on a firm foundation which insured the success of the relief in these regions and greatly facilitated the work of his successors and of the A.R.A.

The Volga Relief Society supported the general feeding in the colonies to the extent of about \$220,000, which was turned over to the A.R.A. for food purchases. Additional aid by means of food packages and other means was important and extensive.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> The work of the Volga Relief Society is described in reports by George Repp, General Secretary and Representative in Russia, John W. Miller, President, and others, which were issued from time to time during the period of activity.

AMERICAN COMMITTEE TO AID RUSSIAN SCIENTISTS WITH  
SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE

Political and economic conditions, as we have seen, bore with especial severity on Russian scholars and scientists. They were forced to abandon their researches to fight for food; for various reasons, material and political, they could not publish such work as they had been able to do; and finally they remained completely cut off from the publications of their colleagues in other countries. Thanks to the American Medical Association, the A.R.A. had been able to distribute a large number of publications in the field of medical science, when the American committee of scientists was organized to collect and forward publications relating to other fields. In the course of a few months this committee of which Vernon Kellogg, Secretary of the National Research Council, was chairman and Raphael Zon, secretary, received a great quantity of scientific literature which the A.R.A. distributed in Russia in co-operation with a committee chosen by the Soviet Government from the Russian Academy of Sciences.<sup>18</sup> Hundreds of letters from individuals and institutions in Russia attested the gratitude of Russian scientists for this exceptional type of "relief."

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With the approach of liquidation Haskell gave the affiliated societies early warning—on April 27 and on June 5—in order that they might complete such arrangements as their plans required. On June 30, 1923, the A.R.A. discontinued such activities as it had carried on in the interests of the coöperating organizations.

<sup>18</sup> Three hundred and sixty individuals, institutions, societies contributed to this work. The largest contributions came from The Smithsonian Institution, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, the American Chemical Society (Washington), Carnegie Institute (Washington), Carnegie Museum (Pittsburgh), United States Geological Survey, California State Mining Bureau. Altogether 445 cases of scientific literature, weighing 28,000 pounds, were shipped to Russia and distributed.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE CAUSES OF THE FAMINE

#### THE LAND OF HUNGER

MANY of the causes of the Russian famine of 1921, like the roots of the revolution of 1917, lie deep in the economic and social history of the country. This is not the place to excavate for them, but it is essential to this story that some of them be briefly examined. An examination is necessary, if only to clear away the débris that has accumulated from political controversy and blocked an objective approach to the events of this period. It is necessary, for example, to show that the failure of the rain to fall in 1920 and 1921 cannot be attributed to the madness of Bolshevism, nor to the intervention of Providence to punish the blasphemous Communists for their sins. It is equally necessary, on the other hand, to show that the causes which made this famine worse than others of recent times were not wholly, or even largely, the result of the blockade of Russia and the intervention of the Allies. Unquestionably there would have been a very short crop in Russia in 1921, had there been no war, no revolution, no blockade, and no Bolshevik government. The powers of resistance of the country, however, would have been considerably greater and the nation might have been able to weather the storm without foreign intervention had its strength not been broken by the combination of these events.

It will be sufficient for the purposes of this story to examine hastily some of the weaknesses of Russian agricultural economy, the famines that have resulted therefrom, and the particular aspects of the situation in 1921, which made this famine more dangerous than its predecessors and the problems of relief more difficult.

Since over 85 per cent of the population of Russia is rural



and 80 per cent of the value of the pre-war exports of the country was derived from farm products, the disaster which befell agricultural economy between 1914 and 1921 is by far the most important of the economic developments of that period. Full significance of this disaster, however, is not apparent, unless seen against the murky background of the pre-war agricultural situation. A very prosperous man is fundamentally less seriously affected by the loss of a considerable portion of his capital and the reduction of his income to half, than is a man who is barely able to make ends meet and suffers relatively the same loss. Russia, it need hardly be said, never has been generally prosperous. This is contrary to the conventional idea of Russia as the great granary of Europe, a fruitful land of vast spaces of waving grain, a land peopled by sumptuous Grand Dukes and plump and tuneful muzhiks. Convention has usually accepted the extravagant romancing of the foreigners, who have discovered and rhapsodized over the splendid qualities that one finds in Russia, and discounted the grim realism of Russian writers whose descriptions of the dark people it regarded as the bilious pessimism of Russian intellectuals. Pre-war Russia strode on the stage of the world, a gaudy, glowering, mediaeval figure, trailing—and ignoring—the odor of squalor and corruption.

Russia's rôle as the exporter of food is better understood when examined in comparison with another country. Canada, for example, where the area planted to the four chief Russian cereals—wheat, rye, barley, oats—was only one-tenth of the area in Russia under the same cultures, exported one-third as much of these grains. The yield per unit of area in Russia was considerably the lowest of any European country, and very large numbers of people were forced to wrest their sustenance from the low-yielding and insufficient fields.<sup>1</sup> A vast majority of the peasant cultivators were in reality raising crops not for export, but for their own maintenance. The grain actually sent out of Russia came chiefly from the great estates of the landed proprietors and a very few rich peasants. Thus, though Russia was one of the world's great exporters of grain,

<sup>1</sup> Density of population of European Russia (census of 1915) was 71 per sq. mile; Canada (1911), 2.0 per sq. mile; United States (1920), 35.5. *Statesman's Year Book*, 1921.

poverty was the common lot in the villages, and hunger and famine a familiar experience.

"It seemed as if he were overwhelmed . . . by the spectacle of the great poverty, the vast wretchedness which, from time immemorial, had reigned over this town and its whole county," says one writer of a typical village in the fertile black-soil country. "Lord, God, what a country! Black loam soil over three feet deep! But what of that? Never did five years pass without famine. The town was famous throughout all Russia as a grain mart—but not more than a hundred persons in the whole town ate their fill of the grain."<sup>2</sup>

Statistics attesting to the extent of poverty among the peasants of Czarist Russia are abundant. In Samara Gubernia—one of the most fertile of the black-soil provinces, but one of the most severely afflicted districts during the famine of 1921—62 per cent of the peasants declared a shortage of foodstuffs for their own needs in 1899. This shortage existed before work was begun in the fields in the spring. In some sections of this gubernia the percentage was higher. In Nikolaiev (renamed by the Bolsheviks, Pugachev, in honor of the famous bandit, and perhaps the most cruelly devastated region of the 1921 famine) the percentage of peasants having less food than they required for their own consumption was 68 and in Buzuluk (the scene of the relief operations of the British and American Quakers) the percentage was 94. In years of average crop in this black-soil gubernia, 61.4 per cent did not produce enough to support themselves. In the Moscow Gubernia, which is not in the black-soil region, there was a normal deficit of 10 poods per head.<sup>3</sup>

There were many causes contributing to the poverty of the peasants. The Act of Emancipation in 1861, in the reign of Alexander II, signalized the end of serfdom and gave to the peasants a degree of personal freedom which they had never possessed. The emancipation, however, did not free them from economic slavery, and their material condition as free men was no better—perhaps even worse—than what they had known as serfs.

<sup>2</sup> Ivan Bunin, *The Village*, 31. New York, 1923.

<sup>3</sup> James Mavor, *The Economic History of Russia*, II, 289-293. Mavor estimates breadstuffs necessary barely to meet the needs of the peasant at 19 poods; to meet the need fully 26.5; more may be considered surplus.

In many cases the allotments of land were less than were generally regarded as necessary to maintain even their accustomed low standard of living. This problem of land hunger, already acute at the time of emancipation, became more critical in the succeeding years with the rapid increase of the population which was not absorbed by the slowly developing industries, by the government's ineffective encouragement of emigration to Siberia, or by the small amounts of land available to the peasants by state purchase from land owners.<sup>4</sup> So great was the pressure of population that there was a saying common in some villages: "May God grant an increase of our cattle and many child deaths." There was a steady decrease of the land available to the peasant, which fell from 4.83 dessiatines per male peasant in 1861, to 3.82 in 1880, and 3.05 in 1900.<sup>5</sup> Before the revolution the per capita landholding had fallen to 1.87 dessiatines per male peasant.<sup>6</sup> Of course these peasant lands were not evenly divided, some peasants holding considerably more than the per capita average and great numbers being entirely without land. In 1905, in 47 gubernias, out of 11,956,876 peasant households 23 per cent had less than five dessiatines per household, and 70 per cent less than ten. At the same time the Government experts held that at least 12.5 dessiatines were necessary to provide adequate sustenance for the average household.<sup>7</sup> There were at this time (1905) no less than 2,200,000 families who worked on the land, but possessed no land of their own.<sup>8</sup>

Such conditions gradually forced the weaker members of the

<sup>4</sup> P. N. Oganovsky (quoted by Hindus, *The Russian Peasant and the Revolution*, 79, New York, 1920), estimates that out of the annual increase of two million souls in rural Russia, the cities absorbed only about 350,000; the remaining 1,650,000 were left in the villages to struggle for existence.

<sup>5</sup> Gregor Alexinsky, *Modern Russia*, 144.

<sup>6</sup> Louis Levine, *Manchester Guardian Commercial*, No. 6, August 17, 1922, *The Agrarian Problem in Russia*.

<sup>7</sup> Hindus, *op cit.*, 78. Mavor says that in Kherson, one of the best grain-producing gubernias of Russia, peasant households having less than 11 dessiatines felt a shortage of rye, their principal food grain, and those having less than 6 dessiatines had a deficiency of wheat and millet as well. Vol. II, 293.

<sup>8</sup> Z. Alotarev, Director of Central Statistical Commission of the Ministry of the Interior, cited by Hindus, *op. cit.*, p. 77; M. P. Price, *My Reminiscences of the Russian Revolution*, 84, London, 1921. "In sixty provinces of Russia there was a surplus agricultural population of twelve millions which could not, owing to the slow development of industry in the north, find employment outside the villages."



communities to sell their live stock, their tools, and other personal property, to sell their land, if they possessed any, or to turn over to others to cultivate the share of land which was theirs by virtue of their membership in a village commune. In this way grew up a large class of agricultural proletarians, hopelessly poor and demoralized, wearing out their days in an everlasting treadmill of debt. In the years of good crops many peasants were able to improve their condition, but the lean years, which came with the inevitability of the seasons, swallowed all their gains. A crop failure forced the peasant who possessed a horse to sell it for 15 or 20 rubles in order to buy bread, and when he replaced his horse in a more prosperous time he paid 130 or 150 rubles for it.

Poor food and little of it, abetted by ignorance, forced up the death rate in the rural districts. In thirteen gubernias it was higher than in the city. In Samara, Perm, Simbirsk, Orenburg, and Viatka, all of which were affected to a greater or less degree by the latest famine, the death rate was between 43 and 46 per thousand.<sup>9</sup>

There was a general belief among the peasants that they could pull themselves from this mire of poverty, if the lands belonging to the State, the Church, and the proprietors were distributed among them, for they were quite unaware that the land from which they were excluded was not extensive enough to alter their circumstances materially when distributed among so great a number. Then there was an age-old belief that God had given the land to those who used it, and therefore the landowners were profiting from what did not belong to them. Even in the days of serfdom the peasant formula had been, "We are yours, but the land is ours." Under such circumstances any political movement which promised to right the ancient wrong and restore the land to the people was certain of the support of the millions, who felt that the realization of such a program would mean the end of their wretchedness. In the hectic days of 1905, there were no less than twenty political

<sup>9</sup>Stepniak Kravchinsky, *Czar-Churban, Czar-Czaplia*, Petrograd, 1921. Also Alexinsky, *op. cit.*, 147: "'The Fijian Archipelago alone,' writes a Russian economist, 'surpasses Russia in its mortality.' Moreover, the death rate in Russia, instead of diminishing, is continually increasing. At the end of the eighteenth century it was 20 per 1,000. At the end of the nineteenth century this figure had risen to 35 and in some parts to 50."

parties courting peasant support with a plan for land reform. The Czar's government, believing that a little knowledge, even about agriculture, was a dangerous thing to the imperial régime, did little to remove the ignorance of the peasants, and to help them to improve their own condition by the use of scientific methods.<sup>10</sup> Tradition ruled the peasants' lives; their guiding principle was, "As the people always have done, so will we do."

### THE SCOURGE OF FAMINE

The weakness and backwardness of Russian agriculture have made famines inevitable whenever and wherever there was a drought. Droughts, moreover, are frequent occurrences in Russia, and for the last nine hundred years the peasants have been paying the toll of hunger with their lives whenever nature was unkind to them. During all these centuries, no means of security against these recurrent disasters has been evolved beyond the primitive one of laying up a store as protection against the days when the fields refuse to yield their usual product. These measures were effective enough when a small area was scorched, when the drought lasted only one season, or when the crops were destroyed by hail or the ravages of insect pests. But when a real drought came in two successive years, burning up the fields for hundreds of miles, the pitiful stores which the peasants were able to put by were ineffective barriers against the wave of hunger and disease that swept over them.<sup>11</sup>

The records of Russian famines go as far back as 1024, appearing in the chronicles of the time, with war and pestilence, as God's scourge of sinful people.

<sup>10</sup> "During all these years," Count Tolstoy points out, 'while in other governments they have introduced ploughs, iron harrows, the sowing of grass and other valuable seeds, fruit-growing, and even mineral manures, in the chief agricultural regions [of Russia] all things remain as of old, the special kind of plough, the tillage distributed in three crops, the fields divided into long narrow strips, and all the manners and customs of the time of Rurik.' Quoted by Geoffrey Drage, *Russian Affairs*, 140-141, London, 1904.

<sup>11</sup> In Czarist Russia the peasant in time of famine had a legal claim for assistance. Each community was by law required to maintain an emergency store of grain and the Zemstvos were supposed to have a special fund for famine relief. The Central Government was expected to make up deficiencies in this fund. These arrangements usually failed when most needed. Lehmann and Parvus, *Das Hungernde Russland*, 298-415, cited by Drage, *op. cit.*, 143-144.

Of the year 1215, says the chronicler:

"O brothers, then was the trouble; they gave their children into slavery. They dug a public grave and filled it full. O, there was trouble! corpses in the market place, corpses in the street, corpses in the fields; the dogs could not eat up the men."<sup>12</sup>

In the 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries seven famines are told of during each hundred years. In the last years of the reign of Boris Godunov, there was a vast failure of the harvests for three years in succession, from 1601 to 1604, bringing famine and pestilence which the people interpreted as the manifestation of the wrath of God for the usurpation of the throne by Boris. In these days, the chronicler of the time tells us, people ate grass like beasts, they ate mice, carrion, "and such filth that it would be a shame to describe it." Dead bodies were found with hay in their mouths and human flesh was sold in pies in the markets. There were famines of greater or less intensity in 1773, 1774, 1777, 1786. Between 1830 and 1845 there fell eight years of bad harvests. Famines were also reported for 1845 and 1846, 1851 and 1855, 1867 and 1868, 1877, 1884, 1891, 1892, 1898, 1906, and 1911. In fact, it is stated that since 1875 scarcely a year has passed that has not seen famine conditions in one or more provinces.

Famines are regular and expected occurrences. The famine years which have been listed were not, however, all disastrous in the same degree. It has frequently happened that when there was a crop failure in one gubernia, neighboring provinces would have normal or at least sufficient crops. Hence, a year which is remembered in one part of the country as a famine year will not be so regarded by the people of another region, whose crops were as good as usual. In the memory of the present generation the famines of 1891-2, of 1906 and 1911 bear comparison with the famine of 1921-22.<sup>13</sup> Large areas felt the drought and millions of peasants were "affected." The

<sup>12</sup> *The Chronicles of Novgorod, 1016-1471*, Royal Historical Society Publication, Vol. XXV, 54, London, 1914.

<sup>13</sup> There were serious crop failures in many sections in 1898 and 1900-1901. The harvest per capita on peasant lands in 1898 in certain gubernias also affected in 1921 was: Samara, 5.2 poods; Simbirsk, 4.7; Ufa, 3.9; Kazan, 2.9. Lehmann and Parvus, *op. cit.*, 321-348; Drage, *op. cit.*, 136.



famine of 1891-92 is of particular interest, because on that occasion America gave generous help to the Russian people.

#### THE FAMINES OF 1891, 1906, AND 1911

A great drought with its resultant famine always gives a warning of its approach. Such was the case in 1891, when the two preceding years gave harvests in the Volga Valley under the average. Out of much conflicting evidence one gathers that at this time thirteen gubernias suffered serious crop failures and there was partial failure in eight others, the number of persons affected being estimated all the way from 15 to 30 millions. The center of the zone of disaster, as in 1921, was the Volga River. The zone, however, extended somewhat farther west than in 1921 and not quite so far east. It did not include any of the Ukraine, parts of which, in the most recent famine, suffered as badly as the Volga.

Critics at the time said that early efforts of the underlings of Alexander III seemed to be directed toward preventing the news of the famine being widely published, and discouraging the efforts of private individuals to mobilize relief.<sup>14</sup> The newspapers were forbidden to use the word "famine" lest it "disturb the public consciousness," and one inspired publication declared that the reports of the disaster were an intrigue of the radicals to discredit the government. St. Petersburg officials, it was said, realized that the news from the Volga was bad, but "were much too polite to tell it to the Emperor."<sup>15</sup> The government attempted to collect the taxes as usual and placed no restriction on the export of grain until too late to be effective, with the result that in this year of the famine Russian exporters sold no less than 310,000,000 poods abroad.<sup>16</sup> When the Government finally acknowledged the

<sup>14</sup> "The Czar has given offense by declaring publicly that no famine exists. . . . This expression of opinion is very general in official circles." *The New York Tribune*, January 4, 1892, quoting *London Chronicle*. Also *The Letters of Anton Chekov*, 285-286.

<sup>15</sup> W. C. Edgar, in "Russia's Conflict with Hunger," *Review of Reviews*, Vol. 5, 1892, 691-700, gives an account of his personal observations in Russia at this time.

<sup>16</sup> Charles Emory Smith, "The Famine in Russia," *The North American Review*, May, 1892. Mr. Smith was then United States Minister at St. Petersburg. He was inclined to defend the Czar and his ministers against the charges that were commonly made. He pointed out that this export in the famine year was less than the preceding year, when 371,000,000 poods were exported.

famine, largely as the result of the efforts of Tolstoy, who was too important to be suppressed, it appropriated \$75,000,000 and gave permission for the collection of funds to be administered by a committee under the chairmanship of the Czar-evitch and through the Red Cross. The attitude of the public towards this policy is described by Chekov in one of his letters: "The point is that the public does not trust the administration and so is deterred from subscribing. There are a thousand legends and fables about the waste, the shameless theft and so on." <sup>17</sup> On the other hand, according to the American Minister <sup>18</sup> at St. Petersburg at the time, the Czar and his government did more than was generally realized and had the best of intentions. They were handicapped, he said, by limited means of communication.

When the news of the famine reached America, several movements <sup>19</sup> were started for the collection of funds and supplies. A not unreasonable doubt, whether the Czar would accept relief he had not asked for, hampered these generous activities. On January 5, 1892, a joint resolution was introduced in Congress to authorize the Navy to employ certain of its ships to transport the supplies already collected, which the railroads had offered to carry to the seaboard free of charge. President Harrison urged the passage of the resolution, which finally did pass the Senate, amended to the effect that the appropriation was not to exceed \$100,000. The House discussed the measure at great length and with expansive oratory, devoting a great deal of the debate to condemnation of the Czar's government and its treatment of the Jews. By the curious logic of legislative assemblies, the windy criticism of the Czar finally smothered the resolution to help his victims. The efforts of private individuals, however, continued, and American donations eventually amounted to over \$700,000 in food-stuffs and cash. <sup>20</sup>

It is interesting to observe that many of the circumstances

<sup>17</sup> *The Letters of Anton Chekov*, p. 285. <sup>18</sup> Charles Emory Smith, *op. cit.*

<sup>19</sup> Among the first was a collection of flour from American millers through the efforts of W. C. Edgar, Editor of the *Northwestern Miller*. Later a Russian Famine Relief Committee of the United States was formed, of which John W. Hoyt was chairman, including in its membership, among others, Ex-President Hayes, Vice-President Morton, Chief Justice Fuller, and various members of Congress, Governors, and other public men.

<sup>20</sup> W. C. Edgar, *op. cit.*

attending the famine and the relief measures of 1891 were repeated in 1921. Opponents of relief charged both the Czar's government and the Soviets with being more responsible than the drought for the famine and with having neglected to take proper measures to combat it. Both were criticized for discouraging the efforts of private individuals and both governments defended their policy on the ground that such private relief activities might endanger the security of their power. The disapproval of both the Czarist and the Soviet governments hampered both mobilizations of American relief, but in 1921 the interference was more efficiently overcome, though the political controversy was more passionate.

The year 1905 saw the end of the Russo-Japanese war, the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth, and widespread uprisings against the authorities in the cities and villages of Russia. In connection with the strikes and disorders which accompanied the revolutionary movement in the cities, the first soviets of workers' delegates made their appearance. In the villages, the peasants were not interested in the political objectives of the town revolutionists, but oppressed, debt ridden, and poverty stricken, with their sufferings augmented by crop failures, carried on a jacquerie rather like that of 1917. By 1906 the Volga provinces were again in the grip of famine, while the Imperial Government, which had been frightened by the events of the preceding year into granting political concessions, now began energetically to win back the lost ground. Thus in addition to their food troubles, the peasants received from the Imperial forces a belated but none less severe punishment for their lawlessness of the year before. Ten gubernias in the Volga area suffered crop failures of a greater or less degree, affecting a population of about 20,000,000. In that year, however, 588,900,000 poods were exported. There were the familiar charges of graft and incompetence <sup>21</sup> against the government officials, who were accused of using in the midst of famine "every legal and illegal trick, every power of police,

<sup>21</sup> Official investigations of corruption in connection with famine relief gave few results. Four years later, however, when Russia was in the midst of another famine an official in Samara was convicted of embezzling \$52,000 of relief funds. This did not allay the suspicions of the people, who held that a dozen bureaucratic thieves went free for every one that was caught.



church, army, prison, Siberia, to prevent the election of a liberal second Duma."<sup>22</sup>

In the spring of 1907 an American relief committee was formed and President Roosevelt sent out an appeal to the country, which was followed by appeals from the Governors of many states. This American committee collected about \$75,000, all of which, apparently, was not required for relief, since the chairman of the Central Zemstvo Relief Committee cabled in June that no more aid was required and proposed to use the small balance of this famine fund for the organization of a traveling school of agriculture.<sup>23</sup>

Again in 1911, when the Russian Minister of Finance was announcing to the world that the revenues of the Empire were so largely in excess of the estimates that it was possible not only to make a considerable reduction in the national debt, but to set aside a surplus of more than \$200,000,000, there was a complete or partial crop failure in the provinces along the Volga and the eastern slopes of the Urals, bringing famine to the doors of 20,000,000 people. The Czarist government, then in the midst of its struggles with the third Duma, again forbade the nation at large to carry out relief work, since the leaders of this enterprise were largely liberals who, it was said, might carry on revolutionary propaganda while feeding the hungry. Like the Communist Government of a later date, the Ministers of Nicholas II told the people: "If you want to help the famine sufferers, turn your money over to us, and we will have our officials distribute the food that it buys." They forbade newspapers to open subscriptions for famine relief; they warned benevolent societies not to make campaigns for funds; and they did not allow the Educational Society of Moscow even to discuss the question of raising money for the relief of starving school children.<sup>24</sup> In Samara, the police refused to allow a representative of the Zemstvo to furnish school children with hot breakfasts at his own expense. Some funds were raised in America for relief, but the general attitude toward the question was expressed in a publication of that

<sup>22</sup> Leroy Scott, "In the Land of the Great Hunger," *The Outlook*, February 23, 1907.

<sup>23</sup> F. Barrows, Secretary of the Russian Famine Relief Committee, "In the Track of the Famine," *The Outlook*, January 11, 1908.

<sup>24</sup> *The Outlook* (New York), January 6, 1912.

time: "The people of the United States would doubtless be glad to extend a helping hand to Russia in this famine as it did in the famine of 1891-92; but if the Russian people were only free to act they would not need help. It is their own government that prevents them from going to the relief of their own suffering fellow-citizens."<sup>25</sup>

### SIGNS OF PROGRESS

In spite of the fact that the situation of the poorer classes of the rural population grew worse rather than better during the first decade of the century, there was a noticeable increase in the agricultural production of the country as a whole. This increase, however, was not great enough, nor were its benefits widely enough distributed, to relieve the pressure of poverty on the peasant masses. From 1900 to 1909-1913 (average) there was an increase in the net income from agriculture of 89 per cent.<sup>26</sup> The seeded area in industrial and commercial plants

<sup>25</sup> *The Outlook*, April 6, 1912. This magazine recommended that those who wished to aid the famine sufferers send their contributions through Hamilton Holt, Treasurer of the Friends of Russian Freedom.

*Russian Information and Review*, February 1, 1922, the official publication of the Soviet Trade Delegation in London, gives the following statistics relative to the three recent famines:

Year of Famine	Land Affected in Acres	Number of Provinces Affected	Number of People Affected	Percentage to the Total Population
1891	41,151,000	9	16,750,000	19
1906	48,528,000	10	21,143,000	22
1911	59,142,000	11	24,951,000	23

It states further that in 1891 only three provinces, in 1906 five provinces, and 1911 six provinces experienced a practically complete crop failure, while in the remaining provinces affected there was only a great shortage. Kamenev, in a memorandum, August 27, 1921, to Dr. Nansen, gave the following figures of per capita production of grain in some of the stricken gubernias in famine years:

	1891	1906	1911	1921
Kazan .....	3.8	1.9	6.8	0.9
Simbirsk .....	8.4	2.6	7.6	2.9
Saratov .....	11.9	8.5	9.0	4.5
Samara .....	6.2	1.8	4.2	0.8
Ufa .....	10.7	4.1	3.3	1.8

<sup>26</sup> S. N. Prokopovitch (ed.), *An Essay on the Income of Fifty Provinces of European Russia* (Moscow, 1918), cited in *The Russian Economist*, I, No. 4, 1100.

increased from 5,398,000 dessiatines in 1900 to 6,006,000 in 1913. There was, moreover, an increase in yield per dessiatine of cereals estimated by Prokopovitch from 34.7 poods in 1896-1900 to 43.5 poods in 1909-1913. The revenue from stock breeding advanced from 831.5 millions of roubles in 1900 to 1,729.7 millions in 1913.<sup>27</sup>

With the beginning of the war, however, a change immediately became apparent. The mobilization of 17,000,000 men and two million horses represented a tremendous diversion of food consumers from productive to unproductive labor. Food production and distribution received the shock. The shortage of labor immediately bore heavily on the large estates and the larger peasant holdings, the principal sources of food for the supply of the cities. These factors combined to produce the decrease of the seeded area between 1913 and the revolution of 1917 of 25 per cent in European Russia; 10 per cent in the Ukraine; and 25 per cent in Asiatic Russia.<sup>28</sup>

### THE FIRST AGRARIAN REVOLUTION (1917-1918)

Many factors, economic, political, and personal, contributed to bring about the decline in power and prestige of the Provisional Government and the rise of the Bolsheviks (or Communists) to power.<sup>29</sup> It is sufficient to note that with a platform which offered peace and bread and land to the people, the Communists voiced the aspirations of a tremendous majority of Russian citizens. Moreover, the Communists could talk as effectively as their rivals, and they could do what their rivals could not—they could act with swift decision.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 1104. Other indications of the improving state of agriculture are the growth of the import of mineral fertilizers (5.9 million poods in 1900; 35.3 million in 1912), and of agricultural implements (2,586 thousand poods in 1900; 11,066 thousand in 1912), *The Agricultural Production* (Ministry of Agriculture, 1915), cited in *Russian Economist*, *op. cit.*, 1073, 1075. There was a similar increase in the home production of these goods. Dr. Hutchinson places the ratio of home production to imports at 3 or 4 to 1.

<sup>28</sup> L. Hutchinson, *Russian Agriculture and the Famine of 1921*, in "On the Trail of the Russian Famine," by F. A. Golder and Lincoln Hutchinson.

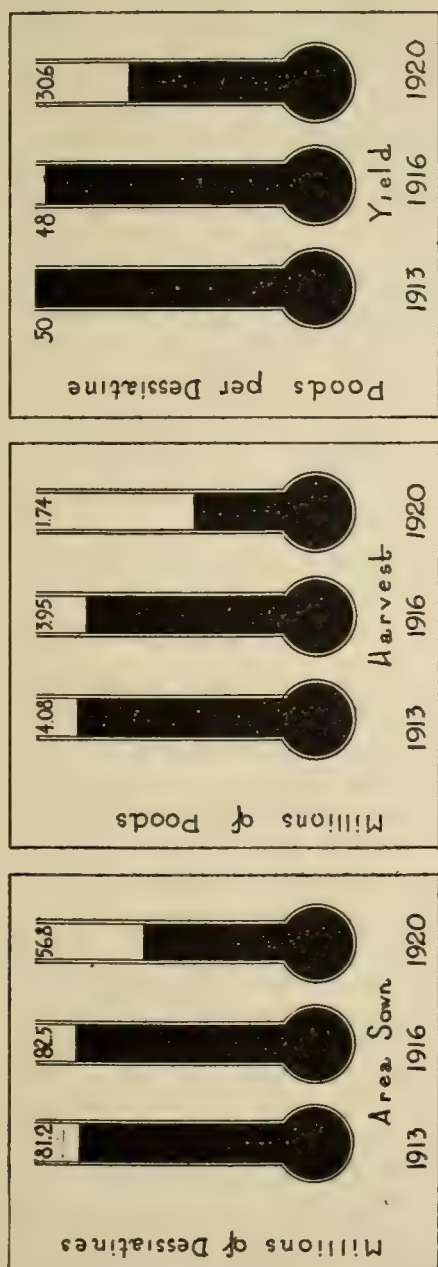
<sup>29</sup> The "Bolshevik Party" became the "Communist Party" in February, 1918, but both names continued to be used even by Party members. The Left Social Revolutionaries also took part in the new government, but played second fiddle to the more vigorous Communists.



In considering the causes which brought about the rapid disintegration of agriculture during the revolution, a distinction should be made between two successive revolutionary movements in the agricultural districts: The first (1917-1918) was the agrarian revolution, carried out by the peasants according to their own ideas, when they took the land, without regard to the theories of the Communists or Social Revolutionaries, though with the encouragement of the leaders of these parties. The second (1918-1920) was when the Communists attempted to apply military Communism to agriculture and to extend the class war to the villages.

The peasant revolution began some months before the Communists took over the power from the provisional government of Kerensky. It proceeded with that destructive violence that distinguishes all peasant disturbances in Russia. The peasant land committees established by Chernov to prepare for the orderly distribution of the public lands and private estates did not satisfy the peasants. Hatred of the nobles and fear that they would return, the temptation of plunder, made the promises of the provisional government ineffective. The peasants began to defy the authority, to force the hands of the legalized land committees, and on their own responsibility to divide the estates in their neighborhood. All proposals for paying the proprietors for their land the peasants bitterly opposed. In Tambov Gubernia, the villages carried out a complete land revolution in defiance of the government. A Saratov peasant in the Second Duma had expressed the attitude of his people when he declared: "We are told it [the land] is a sacred inviolate possession. I think if the people want it there can be no inviolateness about it. . . . The land has been stolen from us. The peasants who have sent me here have said: that the land is ours. We have come here not to buy, but to take it."<sup>30</sup> In the face of growing anarchy, the Kerensky government produced no effective policy. The provisional government fell, the Soviets, controlled by the Communists and the Social Revolutionaries, came into power, and at two o'clock in the morning of their first day (November 8) decreed that the land belonged to the people who worked it, summarily dis-

<sup>30</sup> Quoted by Hindus, *op. cit.*, pp. 226-7.



## Agricultural Statistics - Russia

The data for this were furnished by the Soviet Central Statistical Bureau to the Nansen Mission and are given in the League of Nations *Report on Economic Conditions in Russia*, 94, Geneva, 1922.

posing of the private estates.<sup>31</sup> The effect of this decree was to remove immediately the last barriers of restraint and to intensify the anarchy in the agricultural community.

The regulations governing the transfer of land to the people, issued by the Soviet Government, the peasants ignored. They went about this pleasant pastime as they had been doing under Kerensky, dividing the land according to their own primitive ideas. All classes of the peasant population—the Kulaks (well to do peasants), the middle peasants, and the poor—as well as city workers, eight million of whom returned to the country, participated in the confiscatory activities. The village communes with rapacious energy seized everything within plowing range, or until they collided with the neighboring communes similarly engaged. They carried out the expropriation of the landlords' properties thoroughly and ruthlessly, inspired by hatred of the nobles, by their own cupidity, and by the exhortation of city agitators. The division of the seized land among the members of the community was easy, but then came the problem of dividing the other spoils. An observant foreigner who was on the ground has described a typical occurrence:

"When the division of the land was at an end, conscience and remorse awoke, but along with it was the desire to own and bequeath the good land that had been won so easily and free from debt. The rational thing to do was to get rid of the evil and danger at its root. Realistically endowed as the Great Russians are and with their feelings shrouded in such dim clouds, it did not take the peasants long to come to the conclusion that the estates should be destroyed. In this way would vanish the apparent and material possibility that the masters would ever return. After large and repeated councils in front of the church, action was finally taken. The animals on the estate were the first to be parcelled out. This was an involved exchange and one that took many weeks before it came to an end, as the old miracle of the loaves and the fishes did not repeat itself at this unholy occasion. As every family had to have its share of the cattle and horses, they found it

<sup>31</sup> This decree was based on the ideas of the Social Revolutionaries rather than of the Communists, for as Lenin explained ". . . we cannot disregard the demands of the lower strata of the population even when we are not in harmony with them. . . . The important thing is that the peasants should have the assurance that the landed proprietors no longer exist, that they themselves are able to solve all the questions and dispose of the land."



necessary to dig down to their own hens and geese as small change in order to bring about a settlement. And when a sow gave birth to a litter and a mare had a colt while the division was in process, a new and unexpected strife arose as to who should have the offspring. A great prize stallion proved to be an unsolvable bone of contention. There was nothing left to do but to hit it on the head and divide the skin and the meat. In this way peace and justice were given all due consideration.

"After the animals came the turn of the farm machinery. But most of it would not do for the ordinary husbandry which still does its work with the sickle and the wooden plow. So on that account they were broken up for the iron in them and the pieces dealt out. The less heavy furniture and household articles were also divided up and in the library any one could help himself if he felt so inclined. . . . When there was nothing left on the estate that could be used in an ordinary peasant's house, the place was set afire, and when I saw it only the blackened walls with their sorrowful window openings were standing. . . ." <sup>32</sup>

The slogans of the hour were to "pillage that which has been got by pillage," and "peace to the cottages; war to the palaces."

The division of the spoils naturally caused loud discord, bitterness and violence, not only between the individuals of a community, but between villages, savagely claiming rights to expropriated land. Another unfortunate result was that the peasant homesteaders (khutorianin), who under the Stolypin land law had broken away from the village communes, and were developing farms of their own along progressive lines, were forced by the weight of public opinion and the cupidity of less energetic neighbors to return to the mir and throw their laboriously improved land into the common pool to be divided equally—a process known as "the black partition."

This first agrarian revolution accomplished what the peasant had so long struggled for—the return of the land to the people who worked it,<sup>33</sup> but the actual benefit to the individual was

<sup>32</sup> Henning Kehler, *The Red Garden*, 55-56, New York, 1922.

<sup>33</sup> According to the "*Russische Korrespondenz*," No. 17-18, Berlin, 1920, in 32 provinces of Central Russia the land holdings of the peasants were increased from 76.3 per cent of the total to 96.8 per cent and in the Ukraine from

small indeed. Hutchinson estimates the increase in holdings from  $2\frac{1}{4}$  dessiatines per male peasant before the revolution to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  dessiatines after.<sup>34</sup>

During the period which immediately followed the seizure of the estates, the peasants prospered. The revolution had wiped out the taxes, rents, and debts of Czardom, and the new rulers had not had time to apply new impositions. The opportunities of plunder, moreover, had brought in many unfamiliar, but prized luxuries:—pianos that could not be played; books that could not be read, but whose pages, happily, made passable cigarette papers; paintings, tapestries, and so forth, prized by their former owners and therefore presumably of value. The soaring prices of foodstuffs in the cities had, in spite of the hesitant attempts of the provisional government to prevent it, brought additional profits, especially to those peasants who lived where they could deal easily with the speculators. Having accomplished the purposes of their revolution, the rural population clung tenaciously to their gains. They distrusted and resisted the blandishments and threats of the town revolutionists, but they were even more suspicious of the counter-revolutionary "Whites" who, they truly saw, represented the landlord interests. As between the Whites and the Reds, the peasants preferred the Reds, but their preference was not strong enough to lead them to share their produce with the workers unless they were paid for it.

#### MILITARY COMMUNISM 1918-1920

The prohibition of free trade in food and other commodities, as a part of the Communist policy of nationalization, placed upon the Soviet Government the burden of rationing the urban population and supplying the rural population with industrial goods. Theoretically, the peasant was to hand

55.4 per cent to 96 per cent. L. Levine, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1922, says that peasant holdings in 36 provinces were increased from 80 per cent to 96.8 per cent.

<sup>34</sup> L. Pasvolsky, in *The Economics of Communism*, p. 69, New York, 1921, says that in 22 governments of Soviet Russia only 15,800,000 dessiatines were available for distribution among the peasants and that the individual holdings were increased by scarcely a dessiatine each. Another competent authority states that in a majority of provinces the increase was less than half a dessiatine. B. N. Knipovitch, *Five Years*, cited by S. N. Prokopovitch in *The Economic Condition of Soviet Russia*, London, 1924.

over to the government everything that he produced above his own needs, rye, toddler, potatoes, flax, et cetera, at a fixed price, which was a fraction of the price he might obtain by illegal sale. But, according to theory, the peasant could purchase industrial products at a fixed price far below the speculative level. Moreover, he was entitled to receive from the government two-thirds the value of his delivered surplus in kind—cloth, oil, salt, and other commodities that he needed. The system, for various reasons, did not work. The government could not supply the wants of the peasant either by sale at fixed prices or by payment in kind. The peasant, therefore, refused to deliver his surplus to the government, either concealing it or disposing of it illegally. Naturally it followed that the Communist authorities found great difficulty in providing food for the cities and even for the proletariat and the Red Army on whose support their power largely rested.<sup>35</sup>

Going on the theory that the refusal of the peasants to deliver their surplus grain was largely due to political opposition and to the petty bourgeois ideology of the well to do, the Communists decided to extend the class war to the villages, to compel the obstinate peasants, whom they regarded as traitors to the revolution, to disgorge. First, they gave arms to workmen from the factories and sent them to the country to force the peasants to deliver the grain which they were said to be hoarding selfishly from their starving comrades.<sup>36</sup> Second, they organized in the lowest strata of village life the Committees of Poor Peasants (who were the non-producers) as representatives of the Soviet power to purge the village soviets

<sup>35</sup> The "assessment" method (i.e., requiring each section of the country to deliver a stated amount of food at a fixed price) of maintaining the food supply was not an invention of the Communists. Both the Imperial and Provisional governments had resorted to it without success, for they failed to establish a similar control of industrial prices, leaving the cities free to profiteer at the expense of the country. By the "goods exchange" the Communists hoped not only to put into effect a cherished economic theory but to avoid the mistakes of their predecessors. Figures showing the results of assessment under the succeeding governments vary and are not reliable. These given are from the *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, November 27, 1920, and are valuable merely to illustrate a tendency: In the food campaign of 1916-1917 (Imperial and Provisional governments), the total collection of food grain was 353,953,504 poods; 1917-1918 (period of revolution and disorganization under Provisional and Communist governments), 52,780,192 poods; 1918-1919 (under Communist government), 78,140,188 poods. The territory on which assessments were made changed from month to month between 1917 and 1919.

<sup>36</sup> The use of armed force in requisitioning food was legalized May 14, 1918.



of the non-Bolsheviks and to force the Kulaks and middle peasants to share their possessions with neighbors who lacked either the means or the inclination to earn.<sup>37</sup> The armed detachments, which soon came to be called the "food army," with the Poor Peasants, began what has been called the second agrarian revolution, but which is more accurately discerned as the Bread War, or, according to the Communists, "the sacred war for corn." The food detachments carried on like an army in enemy country. They fought pitched battles with infuriated peasants.<sup>38</sup> They attacked and destroyed the village that resisted. If it did not resist, they searched it from one end of its long, untidy street to the other. Usually they discovered concealed grain, whereupon they seized all grain the guilty peasant possessed. He, in turn, loath to suffer alone, revealed the hidden stores of his neighbors, so that the activities of the collectors were sometimes unusually fruitful. The food detachments treated the peasants as sullen traitors, and the villagers saw the workers and their allies as the detested agents of a new Czarism come to enslave them. The growing efficiency of the Food Army showed in the increased collections, which rose from 170,900,000 poods in 1918-19 to 212,500,000 in 1919-20.<sup>39</sup>

The Committees of Poor Peasants were more successful in their political rôle than as food collectors. They pillaged their richer neighbors of their grain and some of this found its way into the hands of the Commissariat of Food, but a great deal of it undoubtedly got no farther than the committees, who made the most of the opportunity to pay off old scores and to apply the principle that all should share alike in property no matter who owned it, and in the production of the land, no matter who tilled it. The effect on agriculture was of course disastrous, for the middle and well-to-do peasants, realizing that whatever surplus they produced would be seized by

<sup>37</sup> Decrees of May 20 and June 11, 1918, gave the Committees of Poor Peasants their rôle in the new class war. The crisis which led the Communists to adopt these measures is vividly described by M. P. Price, *My Reminiscences of the Russian Revolution*, 306-311, London, 1921. The author was in Moscow at the time and in close touch with the Party leaders.

<sup>38</sup> For example, in Tula, Tver, and Ryazan. Price, *loc. cit.*

<sup>39</sup> Figures which include fodder grain exclude Ukraine and Turkestan. Quoted by Prokopovitch, *op. cit.* *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* (November 27, 1920) gives the figure for 1918-1919 as 107,922,507 poods.

the food army to feed city workers or the poor peasants whom they despised as lazy and worthless members of the community, immediately reduced their cultivation to the point where it would supply only enough for their own needs. They declared a peasant strike.

### THE PRICE OF EXPERIMENT

The Communists soon saw that class war in the villages meant starvation in the cities. They, therefore, decided to liquidate the Poor Peasant Committees—a long and difficult process—and to woo the middle peasants, whom they had injured and alienated. But the theory of confiscation as exemplified in the requisitioning (*Prodrasverstka*), being the answer of orthodox Communism to free trading, was not abandoned, and hence the decline of the cultivated area did not stop merely because the Party had changed its mind.

At the Second Congress for Food Supply in June, 1920, there were warm discussions as to the methods of food collection, but the weight of official opinion held that assessment or requisition with the aid of the Food Army was the only practicable method of solving the food problem.<sup>40</sup> The officials who insisted on the continuance of forced requisitions appear to have overlooked or underestimated the seriousness of the growing exasperation of the peasants. Not only was there physical resistance to the Food Army, but much more effective was the reduction of acreage which the peasants cultivated. This decline in cultivated acreage, which was an important contribution to the severity of the famine of 1921, went on despite threats, decrees, and exhortations.<sup>41</sup> Thus the annual plantings in European Russia had fallen from 56,500,000 dessiatines in 1913-1914 to 30,000,000 in 1920-1921; in the Ukraine,

<sup>40</sup> Statement of Frumkin, official reporter of the Congress, in *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, July 1, 1920, and of Bruchanov in the same paper, June 30. Prigojev advocated a tax in kind as less offensive to the peasants, but this was not adopted until a year later, when the Communists were forced to change their whole economic policy.

<sup>41</sup> In July, 1920, Lenin and Bruchanov (Food Commissar) sent out telegrams declaring compulsory sowing of all available areas for winter crops to be an urgent public problem and that from persons who did not sow their winter crops the land must be taken away and turned over to the villages. *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, August 3, 1920. This was the period when the "militarization of agriculture" became popular.

from 20,000,000 to 14,800,000; in Siberia, from 9,300,000 to 3,100,000.<sup>42</sup>

Lenin, whose frankness was always disturbing to his colleagues, and even some lesser lights of Communism have admitted that the agrarian policy of 1918-1921 was a mistake, but they do not agree as to why the mistake was made. Lenin accepted it as a tactical defeat and made the best of it, but others have, like Trotzky, who said, "The whole policy of war communism was forced by the blockade,"<sup>43</sup> tried to put the blame somewhere else. In 1919, however, before the failure was apparent, the class war in the villages and requisition were held as essential to and consistent with the Bolshevik program of socialization. As Lenin said, "The real Proletarian Revolution in the villages started in the summer of 1918. If we had been unable to start this Revolution our work would have been useless. The first stage was the obtaining of the power in the cities and the establishment of the Soviet form of Government. *The second stage is that which for Socialists is the most essential, that without which Socialists are not Socialists: the separation in the village of the proletarian and half-proletarian elements and the uniting of them with the urban proletariat for the sake of struggling with the bourgeoisie in the villages.*"

It required a palpably falling food supply, a serious stiffening of peasant opposition, riots and uprisings, culminating in the Kronstadt revolt of February, 1921, to convince the Communists of the wisdom of retreat. But then the famine was already upon them.

#### CIVIL WAR AND BANDITRY

Another factor which made the famine disaster more appalling and the measures of relief more difficult was this: a large part of the most productive agricultural area, as well as important centers of the fuel and metallurgical industries,

<sup>42</sup> These figures are Professor Lincoln Hutchinson's and are based on data from the Central Statistical Bureau in Moscow. "Decline of Russian Agriculture," a manuscript in the Hoover War Library. Professor Kondratiev (*Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, November 27, 1921) places the decrease between 1916 and 1920 at 21.2 per cent; between 1916 and 1921 at 34.6 per cent.

<sup>43</sup> A. L. Strong, *The First Time in History*, 37, New York, 1924.



were the battlefields between 1917 and 1921 of formidable military units, followed by even more devastating hordes of bandits. German, Polish, Bolshevik, Ukrainian, counter-revolutionary Russian, French, and Greek troops, as well as innumerable bands of brigands of variegated political complexion, were active in one or another part of the Ukraine. The Volga Valley and the western slopes of the Urals provided the field of operations for the struggle between the Bolsheviks and the Czecho-Slovaks, the Cossacks, and the armies of Kolchak and Krasnov. There was great confusion outside the cities, many peasant uprisings, and bands of Red Guards drove through the country indiscriminately fighting their enemies and each other. So many workmen were employed in this exhilarating activity that all industry in the vicinity came to a standstill.

Then bandits followed the counter-revolutionary armies. At first made up of rebels against the economic and political tyranny of the Bolsheviks, they finally became desperate gangs of demoralized men, whose object was to kill and plunder Communists, but, lacking Communists, to plunder whomever they could find. The most notable bandit leader was Antonov, who began a series of raids through Saratov and the German Communes early in 1920. His operations were successful, if one may believe the report that from one uyezd he carried off 1,870 horses and 80,000 poods of grain, and from another a thousand head of cattle and 40,000 poods of grain. Nevertheless, the Red Guards eventually defeated Antonov and drove him with the ragged remnant of his followers into the forbidding vastness of the Khirghiz steppes. Other smaller bands continued their guerilla tactics against the Soviet authorities in the remote places until the middle of 1921, when a decree was issued giving immunity to those who surrendered.

#### THE BREAKDOWN OF TRANSPORT

Another vital support of the Russian economic system which sagged desperately under the strain of war and revolution was the railways. Even before the war, Russian railways were inadequate for the needs of the country, and the development of transportation lagged far behind that of any other European

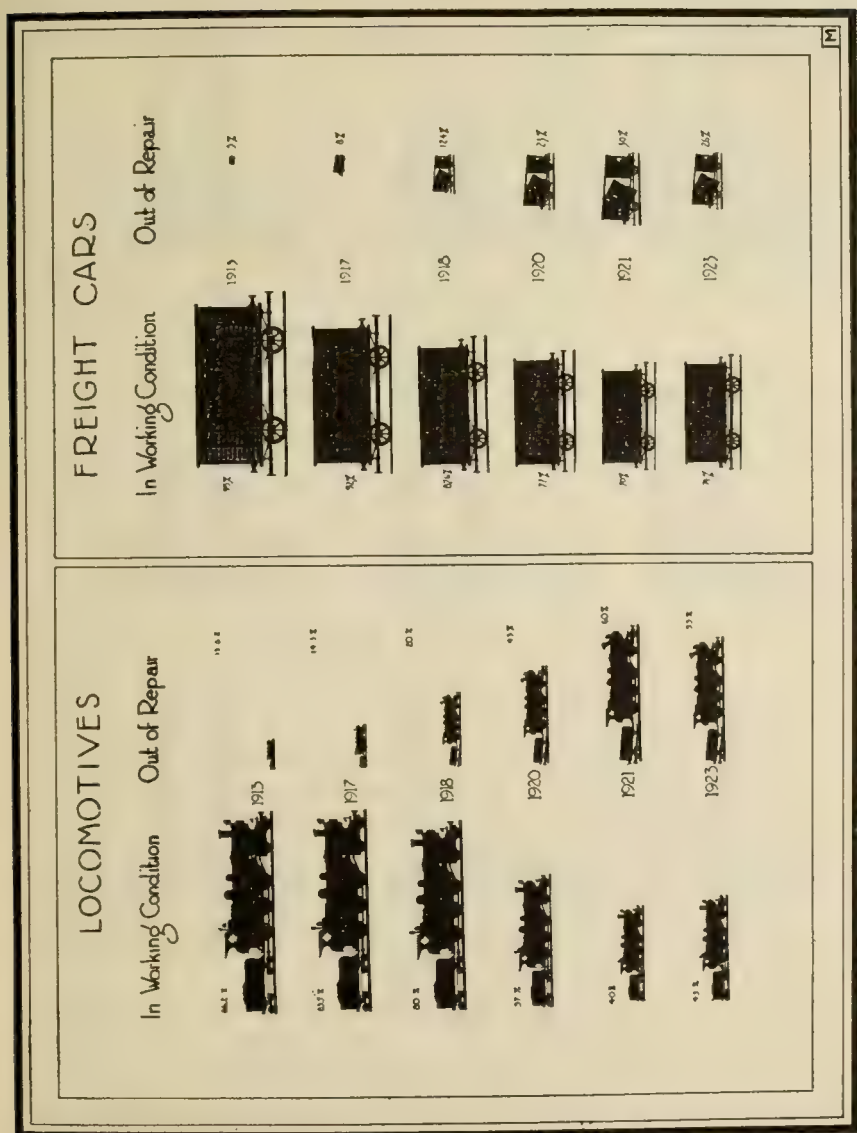
state. As compared with America, Russia had only 25 miles of railway per thousand square miles of territory to 83 miles per thousand square miles in the United States. The Russian lines were consequently overworked, the density of traffic being greater than in any country except England. The enormous strain forced on the railways by the mobilization of millions of men, by the demands of supplying the armies with food, munitions, and other materials combined with the necessity—due to the blockade of the northern ports—of transporting fuel and raw materials to the northern industrial centers from the coal and oil producing regions of the south, were more than the system could stand. The chart on page 493 shows graphically the result. In every department, the same story is told. Three-quarters of the railway lines were in the areas of military operations between 1917-1921; 77 per cent of the lines were out of operation at one time or another due to destruction of track, bridges, et cetera; 3,011 railway bridges and other engineering structures were destroyed in these wars. The normal rate of changing rails before the war was 2,000 versts per year. From 1917 to 1923 the average of rails relaid was not over 100 versts. The normal replacement of ties was 30,000,000 per year. In 1917 about 10,000,000 were replaced; in 1918 almost none. In 1922 the number was 10,500,000. In 1913 coal constituted 65 per cent of fuel of Russian railways; in 1921, due to decrease in production, it constituted 27 per cent.<sup>44</sup> The average distance covered daily by a locomotive in 1913 was 111.6 versts; in 1920, 55.8. The average of cars was 70.2 and 32.6. The average number of cars loaded per day in 1913 was 33,643; in 1916 it was 31,164; and in 1920 it was 10,738.<sup>45</sup>

The physical deterioration was matched by the demoralization of administration and labor. Sabotage played havoc; the doctrine of labor as public duty, eagerly accepted by each individual as applying to his neighbor, brought down the productivity of railway labor to 18.6 per cent of pre-war times.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Above figures from Sidney Brooks, "Russian Railroads in the National Crisis," *A.R.A. Bulletin*, Ser. 2, XLII, who secured his data from the Commissariat of Communications in Moscow in 1922-1923.

<sup>45</sup> *Journal of Means of Communication*, Nos. 1 and 4, 1922. *Statistical Annual 1918-1920*, Moscow, 1922. Cited by League of Nations, in its *Report on Economic Conditions in Russia*, 1922.

<sup>46</sup> Prokopovitch, *op. cit.*, 3.



The data for this chart are from the *Bulletin of the Commissariat of Ways and Communications* 1918, No. 10; *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, April 8, 1919, March 7, 1920; *Bulletin of the Commissariat of Ways and Communications* 1922, Nos. 1 and 4, all as cited in the League of Nations *Report on Economic Conditions in Russia*, 122, Geneva 1922.



The deterioration of transport naturally made the distribution of food and of such industrial products as were produced more difficult and so contributed one more element to the débâcle of 1921.

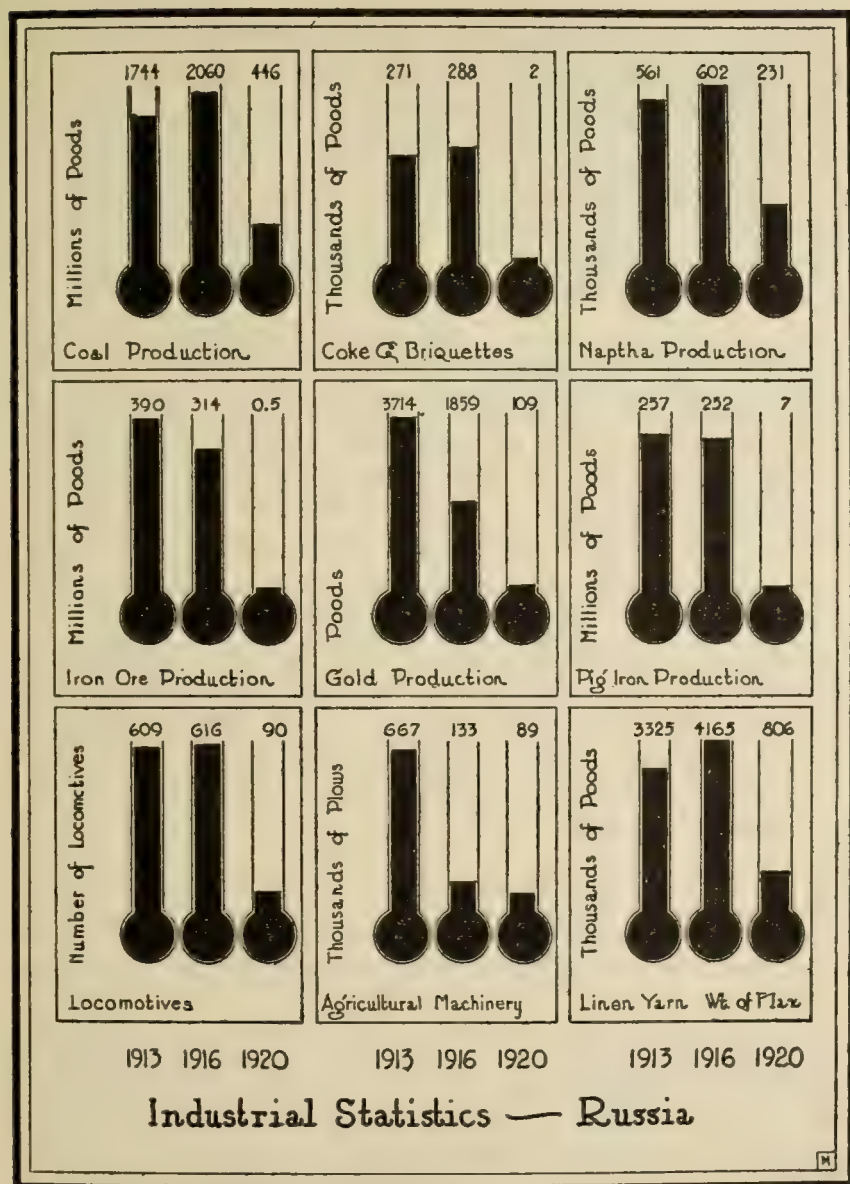
### THE SICKNESS OF INDUSTRY

The relation of the decline of industry to the famine is less direct than that of transport, but it too played its part. Russian industries, like the industries of other countries, had experienced a war boom. There was plenty of employment and plants of practically every description increased their output. The city of Petrograd, though its port was closed at the beginning of the war to remain inactive for six years, doubled the number of workers employed in its shops and factories between 1914 and 1916. There was a noticeable increase in the production of Russian fuel industries, and even an increase in the productivity of labor. The output of locomotives and cars increased but not enough to balance the losses sustained. Production in metallurgical industries was maintained, but there was a significant decrease in the manufacture of agricultural machinery. Before the revolution, this boom had subsided and reaction had set in. On the eve of the upheaval, industrial production was about 71 per cent of pre-war and in 1920, after two years of civil war and Communism, it was down to 13 per cent.<sup>47</sup> The chart on page 495 shows the production of this period and what happened after the revolution in 1917. How these developments affected the Russians as individuals is suggested by the table on page 496 showing the supply of Russian-produced commodities for general consumption in 1920 as compared with 1912.<sup>48</sup>

In connection with the decline in the output of industry, the decrease in the efficiency of the workman is important and interesting. The output per man in 1920, as compared with 1912, was as follows, according to industries: woollen, 60 per cent; linen, 44 per cent; cotton, 22 per cent; petroleum, 50 per cent; coal mining, 25 per cent; other mining, 11 per

<sup>47</sup> V. I. Popov, Director of Central Statistical Bureau, Moscow, cited by Prokopovitch, *op. cit.*

<sup>48</sup> Hutchinson, *Russian Agriculture and the Famine of 1921*. These figures are from official Soviet sources.



This chart is based on data from the *Statistical Annual of the Russian Industrial Union*, St. Petersburg, 1912; *The Financial Bulletin of the Imperial Ministry of Finance*; *The Statistical Annual*, 1918-20, Moscow, 1921; and *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* for the years 1921 and 1922.

All as cited in the *League of Nations Report on Economic Conditions in Russia*, 113-119, Geneva, 1922.

## SUPPLIES IN GOLD RUBLES PER CAPITA

	<i>Pre-War</i>	<i>1920</i>
Sugar and Molasses .....	4.87	0.24
Tobacco .....	1.03	0.36
Coffee and Substitutes .....	0.02	0.04
Textiles .....	6.77	0.91
Kerosene .....	0.88	0.11
Soap and Perfumery .....	0.36	0.07
Crude Petroleum .....	1.28	0.26
Coal .....	0.88	0.34
Vehicles .....	0.64	0.10
General Machinery .....	0.59	0.05
Agricultural Machinery and Implements .....	0.34	0.04

cent; wood working, 21 per cent; metallurgical, 11 per cent.<sup>49</sup> Thus it happened that because of the dispersion of the workers and the reduced output of those who remained in the towns there was an acute labor shortage in 1920 which further hampered those industries which still struggled desperately to keep alive.

The effect on the food situation of the failure of the "goods exchange," because of lack of goods, has already been mentioned. Political struggles, the disruption of trade by war, and the nationalization policies<sup>50</sup> of the Soviet Government threw many out of employment and the food shortage drove these workers back on the villages where they could not be immediately absorbed.<sup>51</sup> When the crops failed in 1921 these town workers, with the landless peasants, became the first and easiest victims.

## THE SHADOW OF THE FAMINE

The year 1920 found Russia weary from the burden of long wars, weakened by internal strife, morally broken by the con-

<sup>49</sup> Hutchinson, *op. cit.*

<sup>50</sup> Workers' Control was established by decree November 27, 1917. Later it was revoked. Monopolies were established: newspaper advertisements, November 21, 1917; agricultural machinery, December 13, 1917; book publishing, January 17, 1918; matches, candles, rice, coffee, pepper and spices, March 20, 1918; foreign trade, April 5, 1918; trade in textiles, April 5, 1918. Nationalization went along contemporaneously: "socialization of the land," December 17, 1917; nationalization of banks, December 30, 1917; merchant fleet, February 10, 1918; grain trade, February 28, 1918; sugar, May 16, 1918; forests, June 9, 1918; naphtha, July 5, 1918; estates in cities, September 2, 1918. These dates are those of S. Zagorsky, *La République des Soviets, Bilan Économique*, Paris, 1921.

<sup>51</sup> *Bulletin* 33 of the Soviet Central Statistical Bureau, quoted in the *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn*, December 1, 1920, states that the population of forty provincial capitals shrank between 1917 and 1920 from 6,392,000 to 4,295,000. Fifty other towns showed a decrease over the same period from 1,517,000 to 1,271,000.



vulsions of social revolution, and isolated from the world by a broad gulf of enmity and suspicion. Industry was dead; trade existed only in violation of Soviet law; agriculture, still in the process of communization, had almost reached the point where what it produced, if evenly distributed, was scarcely enough to maintain the people of the country; administrative chaos and physical deterioration of rail and river transport made distribution impossible. Hunger, starvation, disease were increasing, and Russia stood ready to sink into famine before the drought came.

This drought and the subsequent failure of the crops did not come unheralded. But though warned by the grim, familiar forerunners of disaster, the people could not take measures to protect themselves, and the government, whatever the reasons animating it, pursued at first a policy which tended to increase rather than relieve the panic of the people.

As in other days within the memory of those still living in the villages of eastern Russia, when fields were burned and King Hunger reigned, the drought seemed to crawl sneakingly out of the vast steppes of western Siberia, across the trans-Volga plains, like a formless monster moving slowly, and relentlessly destroying the living things in its path. Men noticed the signs of its coming early in 1920. The spring was hot and almost rainless, and the land at the time of the spring planting was caked and dry. The summer followed with scant rain, cereals ripened before their time, and the crops were far from satisfactory. In the autumn, again, there was insufficient rain, and the winter crops were sown in soil too dry to promise fruition. The meaning of these ominous signs was not lost on the peasants. They renewed their futile attempts to hold back the grain from the hands of the government collectors, and pleaded with the officials that if the requisition was carried out not enough grain would remain for spring planting. These signs of coming disaster were not, of course, hidden from the Communist officials. Nevertheless there was no immediate relaxation of the regulations that drove the peasants to sabotage, and revolt might have been expected. Instead they embarked on a policy more severe than anything

yet attempted—the militarization, first of labor, and then of agriculture. With the success of the Red Armies in 1919, the belief in the effectiveness of the military methods in all lines of endeavor became as popular with the rulers of Russia as it had been with the rulers of other lands during the recent war. Trotzky became the most conspicuous victim of this belief and the shining apostle of militarism in production, basing his advocacy, however, on Communist theory.<sup>52</sup> As acting Commissar of Communications Trotzky did succeed in putting a military régime on the railroads, depriving the unions of their power and, though he improved the service temporarily, he aroused the maddened opposition of this and other unions and destroyed what remained of the *esprit de corps* of the men. The attempts to conscript labor for industry were no more successful than the militarization of the railroads or the use of battalions of troops in farm work or in the forests. The feeling of labor conscripts was expressed in a memorial of Petrograd workmen September 5, 1920. "We feel as if we were in the galleys where everything is regulated except food. We are no longer free men, we have become slaves."<sup>53</sup> Strikes were frequent and the government resorted to arrests, executions, and deportation to the concentration camps in north Russia, which now served the Communists as the Siberian mines did the Czar.

The great scheme for the militarization of agriculture is credited to Ossinsky. The peasants' refusal to accept Communism, and their resistance through the reduction of the sowing area to the requisitions constituted sabotage which

<sup>52</sup> At the Third All Russian Congress of Trade Unions, April, 1920, Trotzky said, in part: "Under the new social régime and during the period of transition every worker is to be regarded as a soldier of the Army of Labor; he has to obey the command of the Government upon which he conferred power. It is said that compulsory labor is not productive. If that is so, Socialism is bound to fail. . . . If we admit that, we must recognize also the right of the State to send any worker where he is most wanted. We also recognize the right of the State to punish any one who refuses to obey that command. . . . Militarization of labor . . . is the essential and unavoidable means of organizing labor, of regulating it compulsorily in accordance with the wants of a socialistic society during the period of transition from Capitalism to Communism. If such labor, compulsorily organized and distributed, is not productive, then Socialism is doomed to failure." Quoted by S. N. Prokopovitch, *The Economic Condition of Soviet Russia*, 31-32, London, 1924.

<sup>53</sup> Cited by K. Leites, *Recent Economic Developments in Russia*, 195, London, 1922.

could be overcome, according to Ossinsky, only "by compulsory State regulation of agricultural production as a whole," by forcing the peasants to cultivate the soil according to a fixed plan. Although this virtual return to serfdom was criticized by the more practical minded, Ossinsky was hailed by a majority of his articulate associates as a Daniel come to judgment. In spite of the opposition of even hand-picked peasant delegates, the Eighth All Russian Congress of Soviets (December, 1920) embodied the scheme in a decree. The two points of view are well illustrated in quotations from the discussion of these measures. Said Ossinsky: "We have almost failed to understand that the so-called militarization of industry and the application of the general principle of the duty to work must first of all be imposed on agriculture. Indeed, here the mobilization of unskilled labour with its primitive implements is the most natural and necessary, and will yield the best results." <sup>54</sup>

Said a peasant: "We are sick of all these committees and yet you are adding to them. Look around: there are almost as many committees in a Volost as there are households. If the committees were put one on top of the other they would almost reach the sky. They are standing on the calloused neck of the toiling peasant and his legs are tottering and will soon break down."

### THE IRON BROOM

The government, working on the theory (which underlay the militarization scheme) that the peasants were minimizing their resources in order to escape paying the requisition tax, carried out the collection in 1920 with furious energy. The food detachments were unusually active and military posts, established on all ways of communication, both rail and water, confiscated from the travelers whatever food they might be carrying. The authorities rewarded the most efficient tax collectors and dismissed those who appeared inclined to accept the peasants' estimates of the situation and be lenient. So energetic and ruthless were the food collectors that, in spite of partial crop failures in several gubernias, the collection ex-

<sup>54</sup>Quoted by M. S. Farbman, *Bolshevism in Retreat*, 251-252, London, 1923.



ceeded that of the preceding year. The meaning of the signs of drought were unmistakable and evidently roused the government to some sense of the gravity of the situation. *Izvestia*, the official paper of the Central Executive Committee, in a series of articles, warned the peasants to prepare and prevent the impending famine. "But," says a Communist writer, "the peasant masses at large unfortunately remained inert and indifferent to this warning."<sup>55</sup>

There were very serious departures from this inertness in many places. Seeing themselves without resources and faced with the certainty of famine, many villagers began the flight from their homes which culminated in the great refugee movement that flowed on unstemmed, until American corn reached the villages in the winter of 1921-1922. In some places the peasants in desperation stormed and pillaged the seed grain stores in order to get seed for their spring sowing. In the southern Volga gubernias and in the southeast there were frenzied, futile revolts of the maddened people. The tactics of the authorities which provoked these revolts are illustrated by this account of what occurred in the German Volga Communes: "With sorrow the settler looked forward to the future. In the autumn of 1920 little rye was sown. Instead of assistance the government put forward new demands. The town laborers were starving. . . . Armed gangs of laborers from the Tula government were selected to see that this decree [of confiscation] was carried out. The gang was known as the 'Iron Broom.' It was a fit and proper name. For like roaring lions they came to the settlements, . . . all houses, barns, stables, cellars, lofts were searched and literally swept of everything they contained down to the last dried apple and the last egg . . . and woe to the farmer, in whose house flour, or any other produce was found; he was tortured and whipped to the blood . . . but the feeling runs very high on account of the cruelty of the Tula Communists. In several settlements the appearance of their starving children caused many mothers to ask on their knees, and in tears, for bread at the supplies commissariats at which thousands of poods of grain were

<sup>55</sup> M. M. Morgenstern, *15 Mesiachev Golodnovo Fronta*, in *Tsentralnaia Komissiia pomoshchi golodaiushchim. Itogi Borby s Golodom v 1921-22 g.g.* 9-22. Moskva, 1922 g.

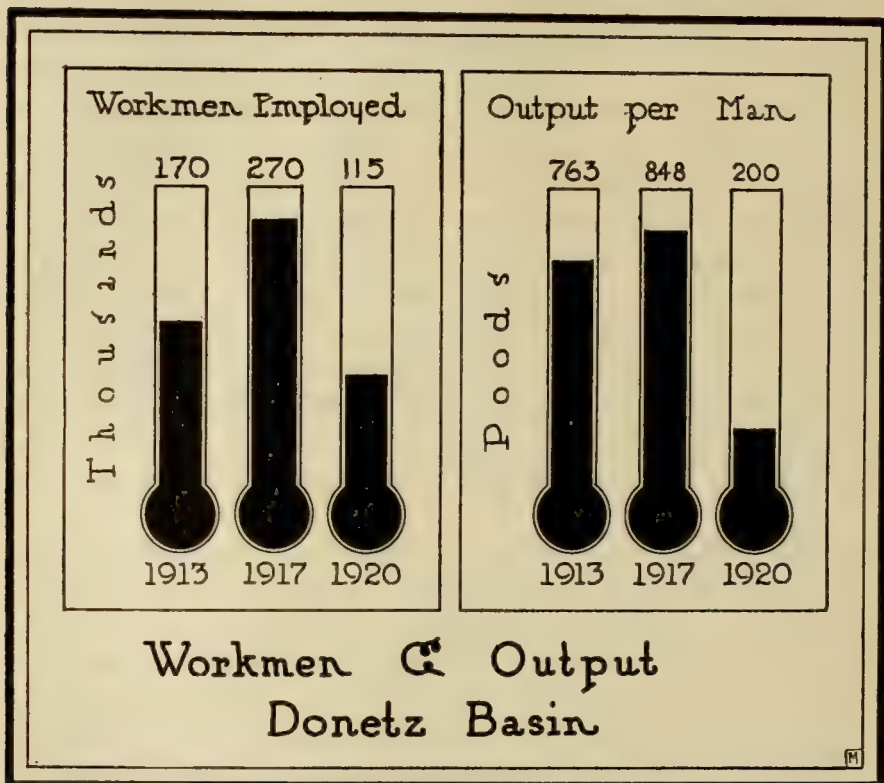
stored; but instead of getting bread they were whipped and struck with butted rifles." In January and February, 1921, according to the account <sup>56</sup> disturbances and revolts broke out and when a regiment mutinied and Vakulin, its leader, urged the starving and oppressed Germans to die fighting rather than live as slaves, many peasants joined him. The rebels captured grain stores and distributed them among the people. However, guns and ammunition were lacking and soon the troops from Saratov and other cities came and suppressed the revolt. An "unspeakably cruel revenge was taken in villages in which the insurgents, prior to this, had cruelly slaughtered and murdered all Communists who had been caught. Thus in a German settlement of five to six thousand settlers, which for a length of time had shown resistance, the Red Army men shot three hundred persons (the first they came across) without trial. And after the military had left the tribunal which had relieved the soldiery had as many condemned and done to death."

Scenes like this were reported in other gubernias, although the conflict was not always as bitter as in the German colonies. In Simbirsk, which was a famine gubernia in 1921, the local estimates placed the crop of 1920 as actually less than was required for the gubernia itself, yet the Central Government took food from Simbirsk as late as March, 1921. Likewise in Samara and Saratov, although the crop failure was considerable in 1920, the Iron Broom did its work. From Pugatchev uyezd, which within a few months was to be known to the A.R.A. as the worst spot in the Volga, there were heavy requisitions as late as May, June, and July of 1921. The villages were deprived of the only defense they possessed against famine—the meager reserves, which from old custom they held back against the years of drought.

Suddenly a terrific blow shattered the optimism of Moscow. There swiftly developed a fuel crisis, a rail crisis, a food crisis,

<sup>56</sup> From a memorandum by an eyewitness, a German Pastor: "The Hardships of Our Co-Religionists in the German Volga Colonies," written November 10, 1921. These colonies were settled by Germans at the invitation of the Great Catherine. They were more prosperous, more progressive and more individualistic and hence even more staunchly opposed to Communism than their Russian neighbors. The principal town, formerly called "Ekaterinstadt," is now "Marxstadt."

and a general assault on the Communist Party, and its methods of militarization and bureaucratic control. There were strikes in the industries, desertions from the Communist Party, and



This chart is based on data from the *Statistical Annual of the Russian Industrial Union*, St. Petersburg, 1912; the *Financial Bulletin* of the Imperial Ministry of Finance; the *Statistical Annual*, 1918-1920, Moscow, 1921; and *Ekonomicheskaya Zhizn* for the years 1921 and 1922.

All as cited in the League of Nations *Report on Economic Conditions in Russia*, 113-119, Geneva, 1922.

finally the leather, metal, and railway unions passed a resolution favoring the obnoxious and anti-communistic doctrine of free trading.<sup>57</sup> With these disturbances in the capital came the news of the peasant uprisings, and finally the culminating event, the mutiny of the Kronstadt sailors whose war cry was,

<sup>57</sup> The strikes and demonstrations in Petrograd, the activities of Communist troops, the origin of the Kronstadt mutiny, the sailors' demands, their defeat, and the executions that followed are described by Emma Goldman, who was in Petrograd at the time, in her *My Further Disillusionment in Russia*, Chapter VI, Garden City, 1924.



"Long live the Soviets; down with the Bolsheviks." Although the Bolsheviks publicly described the mutiny as a monarchist uprising, the demands actually put forward by the mutineers were not counter-revolutionary, but against the harsh dictatorship of the Communist Party. The sailors protested against the oppressive restrictions that the Communists were applying to the peasants, and the workers, reflecting the feeling of the peasants with whom they had renewed their contacts while on leave during the winter.<sup>58</sup> The seriousness of this affair was enhanced by the fact that the Kronstadt sailors had been in the forefront of the October Revolution that had put the Communist Party in power. They had been saluted by Trotsky himself as the pride and glory of the Revolution. Party members at last saw clearly what Lenin has already realized: that the Communists had reached the parting of the ways. Either they must maintain their Communist principles and go down fighting the rising opposition, or they must abandon the principles they had so valiantly proclaimed and give in to the demands of the peasants, whom they had been unable either to convert or to conquer. The result was the New Economic Policy, which granted many of the things for which the Kronstadt sailors had mutinied and for which many lost their lives. The most important concessions were the establishment of free trade and the substitution of the tax in kind for requisition.<sup>59</sup> The N.E.P. could not undo what had been done, but it was the first step in a new direction and the most notable event in Russian history since the October Revolution.

<sup>58</sup> Bukharin, in a speech at the III Congress of the Third International, July 8, 1921, explains the revolt in this way: "The documents which have since been brought to light show clearly that the affair was instigated by purely white guard centres, but at the same time the Kronstadt mutiny was a petty bourgeois rebellion against the Socialist system of economic compulsion. Sailors are mostly sons of peasants, especially Ukrainian peasants. Ukraine is more petty bourgeois than Central Russia. . . . They are against Czarism but have little sympathy for Communism. The sailors were home on leave and there became strongly infected with peasant ideas." Quoted from "The New Economic Policy of Soviet Russia," by N. Bukharin in *The New Policies of Soviet Russia*, 56, Chicago, 1921.

<sup>59</sup> The decrees establishing the N.E.P. were issued on March 24, 29, April 1, 2, 23, and 24. These decrees are summarized by Eugene Schkaff, *La Question Agraire en Russie*, 276, Paris, 1922. Part III of this book, "La Revolution Russe et la Politique Agraire des Soviets 1917-1922," is an excellent presentation of the subject.

## SCORCHED FIELDS

The spring and early summer of 1921 fulfilled the dark omens of the autumn months, and the certainty of a colossal crop failure brought panic to the Volga lands. There was light snow fall in winter. The spring rains, at best meager, failed completely. With the disappearance of the snow, hot weather came immediately and the grain was burned as it came up from the ground. The Volga River after the spring thaw showed the lowest level in years. The wells in many localities began to give out.<sup>60</sup> Early in the summer great numbers of peasants were already without food and all up and down the Volga and as far east as the Urals they were beginning to mix grain with ground straw, weeds, and bark. Those who were without food and those who were in sight of the end of their resources, in panic joined the swelling multitudes of refugees in flight from the scorched lands. By train, by boat, on foot, the refugees streamed from the villages and gathered in hordes at the railway stations and in the cities bringing disease and death and laying on the towns a burden they were totally unable to meet. The Soviet Government tried to control the situation by the import of food from the unaffected areas and by regulation of the refugee movement. But its means and organization were unequal to so great a task.

On July 21, 1921, the Soviet Government for administrative purposes marked out the area which was to be regarded officially as famine stricken. This area covered about 800 miles from north to south between Viatka and Astrakhan and about 350 miles at its widest point from east to west between Penza

<sup>60</sup> An indication of the weather conditions in a typical Volga province is to be found in the following official figures for the Samara Gubernia quoted by the correspondent of the *Times* (London) September 18, 1921: "The three critical months for the crops are, of course, April, May, and June. During the last 23 years the average rainfall for these months has been as follows: April, 21 mm.; May, 38.8 mm.; June, 46.9 mm. This year it was: April, 1.7 mm.; May, 0.3 mm.; June, 5.1 mm. In a word, instead of the usual rainfall of some 106 mm., the province has had only 7 mm. For the last 17 years, ever since records have been kept, the mean air temperature in the Samara province has been: April, 5.1 deg. Réaumur; May, 13 deg. Réaumur; June, 19 deg. Réaumur. This year has been: April, 9.2 deg. R.; May, 20 deg. R.; June, 25 deg. R. The soil temperatures for the last 17 years have been these: April, 6 deg. R.; May, 17 deg. R.; June, 25 deg. R. But this year they are: April, 13 deg. R.; May, 25 deg. R.; June, 32 deg. R."

and Ufa. Even at this time the Government did not recognize the full extent of the drought; at least, it did not reflect its realization in official decrees. Within a few months, however, the official famine area had to be extended to include territories to the east of those previously designated, crossing the Urals into the edge of Siberia. In the Ukraine likewise there was a drought as severe as that of the Volga in all the provinces bordering on the Black Sea, with an area of over 85,000 square miles, and eventually this territory also was declared famine stricken.

The map on page 50 indicates the extent of the crop failure area in relation to the total area of European Russia. More significant than the extent of territory covered by the drought is the fact that it embraced almost all of the most productive land, that is, the "producing region" which normally supplies not only all the grain that is exported from Russia, but such grain as is required to make up the deficit of food for the "consuming region" to the north. Of the producing region only the north Caucasus, the north Ukraine, and a few of the Central Russian provinces were spared and in these provinces, upon which Russia had largely to depend, in 1921, the production had fallen to half that of pre-war days. The region which in the years from 1908 to 1912 produced on an average of over 2,900,000,000 poods, of which it exported 375,000,000 poods and kept for the feeding of its own people 2,566,000,000 poods, produced in 1921 only 1,617,000,000 poods, or only 63 per cent of what it had formerly consumed.

#### DEMORALIZATION

A catastrophe such as that which overwhelmed Russia in 1921 called for the mobilization of all forces of all classes of the nation. Unfortunately such a mobilization was no more possible under Communism than under Czarism and for the same reason. Neither dared encourage initiative outside the bureaucracy for any purpose—even for fighting famine—lest it in some way turned against the rulers of the nation. In the Russia of the Revolution initiative had, of course, been killed, first by the wild terror of license, and then by the cold terror of oppression. Hope, likewise, was almost dead and



Russia received the shock of famine, broken not only in body, but in spirit. Denunciation, spying, bloodshed had become common in town and country. In villages where murder had been a terrifying event to be talked of for years, death by violence became a matter of interest only to the police and of not too much interest to them, engaged as they were in other matters. Distrust of the government and its agents, suspicion and hatred of neighbors, left the peasants confused and hopeless and less able to withstand the shock to which unfavorable natural conditions always exposed them. When in the summer of 1921 the signs of a greater famine became unmistakable, the peasants became panic-stricken or stunned, and fled from their villages in terror, or remained stolidly to wait for death.

## APPENDIX A

### DOCUMENT I

#### (RIGA AGREEMENT)

#### AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION AND THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC

WHEREAS a famine condition exists in parts of Russia, and

WHEREAS Mr. Maxim Gorky, with the knowledge of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, has appealed through Mr. Hoover to the American people for assistance to the starving and sick people, more particularly the children, of the famine stricken parts of Russia, and

WHEREAS Mr. Hoover and the American people have read with great sympathy this appeal on the part of the Russian people in their distress and are desirous, solely for humanitarian reasons, of coming to their assistance, and

WHEREAS Mr. Hoover, in his reply to Mr. Gorky, has suggested that supplementary relief might be brought by the American Relief Administration to up to a million children in Russia.

THEREFORE It is agreed between the American Relief Administration, an unofficial volunteer American charitable organization under the chairmanship of Mr. Herbert Hoover, hereinafter called the A.R.A., and the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic hereinafter called the Soviet Authorities,

That the A.R.A. will extend such assistance to the Russian people as is within its power, subject to the acceptance and fulfillment of the following conditions on the part of the Soviet Authorities who hereby declare that there is need of this assistance on the part of the A.R.A.

The Soviet Authorities agree:

*First:* That the A.R.A. may bring into Russia such personnel as the A.R.A. finds necessary in the carrying out of its work and the Soviet Authorities guarantee them full liberty and protection while in Russia. Non-Americans and Americans who have been detained in Soviet Russia since 1917 will be admitted on approval by the Soviet authorities.

*Second:* That they will, on demand of the A.R.A., immediately extend all facilities for the entry into and exit from Russia of the personnel mentioned in (1) and while such personnel are in Russia the Soviet Authorities shall accord them full liberty to come and go and move about Russia on official business and shall provide them with all necessary papers such as safe-conducts, laissez passer, et cetera, to facilitate their travel.

*Third:* That in securing Russian and other personnel the A.R.A. shall have complete freedom as to selection and the Soviet Authorities will, on request, assist the A.R.A. in securing same.

*Fourth:* That on delivery of the A.R.A. of its relief supplies at the Russian ports of Petrograd, Murmansk, Archangel, Novorossisk, or other Russian ports as mutually agreed upon, or the nearest practicable available ports in adjacent countries, decision to lie with the A.R.A., the Soviet Authorities will bear all further costs such as discharge, handling, loading and transportation to interior base points in the areas where the A.R.A. may operate. Should demurrage or storage occur at above ports mutually agreed upon as satisfactory such demurrage and storage is for the account of the Soviet Authorities. For purposes of this agreement the ports of Riga, Reval, Libau, Hango and Helsingfors are also considered satisfactory ports. Notice of at least five days will be given to Soviet representatives at respective ports in case the Soviet Authorities are expected to take c.i.f. delivery.

*Fifth:* That they will at their own expense supply the necessary storage at interior base points mentioned in paragraph (4) and handling and transportation from same to all such other interior points as the A.R.A. may designate.

*Sixth:* That in all above storage and movement of relief supplies they will give the A.R.A. the same priority over all other traffic as the Soviet Authorities give their own relief supplies, and on demand of the A.R.A. will furnish adequate guards and convoys.

*Seventh:* That they will give free import re-export and guarantee freedom from requisition to all A.R.A. supplies of whatever nature. The A.R.A. will repay the Soviet Authorities for expenses incurred by them on re-exported supplies.

*Eighth:* That the relief supplies are intended for children and the sick, as designated by the A.R.A. in accordance with paragraph (24), and remain the property of the A.R.A. until actually consumed by these children and the sick, and are to be distributed in the name of the A.R.A.

*Ninth:* That no individual receiving A.R.A. rations shall be deprived of such local supplies as are given to the rest of the population.

*Tenth:* That they will guarantee and take every step to insure that relief supplies belonging to the A.R.A. will not go to the general adult population nor to the Army, Navy or Government employees but only to such persons as designated in paragraphs (8) and (24).

*Eleventh:* That Soviet Authorities undertake to reimburse the A.R.A. in dollars at c.i.f. cost or replace in kind any misused relief supplies.

*Twelfth:* That the A.R.A. shall be allowed to set up the necessary organizations for carrying out its relief work free from governmental or other interference. The Central and Local Soviet Authorities have the right of representation thereon.

*Thirteenth:* That the Soviet Authorities will provide:

- A. The necessary premises for kitchens, dispensaries and, in as far as possible, hospitals.
- B. The necessary fuel and, when available, cooking, distributing and feeding equipment for the same.



- C. The total cost of local relief administration, food preparation, distribution, etc., themselves or in conjunction with local authorities. Mode of payment to be arranged at later date.
- D. On demand of the A.R.A. such local medical personnel and assistance, satisfactory to the A.R.A., as are needed to efficiently administer its relief.
- E. Without cost railway, motor, water or other transportation for movement of relief supplies and of such personnel as may be necessary to efficiently control relief operations. The Soviet Authorities will for the duration of the A.R.A. operations assign to the A.R.A. for the sole use of its personnel, and transport free of cost, such railway carriages as the A.R.A. may reasonably request.

*Fourteenth:* In localities where the A.R.A. may be operating and where epidemics are raging, the A.R.A. shall be empowered by the Soviet Authorities to take such steps as may be necessary towards the improvement of sanitary conditions, protection of water supply, etc.

*Fifteenth:* That they will supply free of charge the necessary offices, garages, store-rooms, etc., for the transaction of the A.R.A. business and when available heat, light and water for same. Further that they will place at the disposal of the A.R.A. adequate residential quarters for the A.R.A. personnel in all localities where the A.R.A. may be operating. All such above premises to be free from seizure and requisition. Examination of above premises will not be made except with the knowledge and in presence of the chief of the A.R.A. operations in Russia or his representative and except in case of flagrant delit when examiner will be held responsible in case examination unwarranted.

*Sixteenth:* That they will give to the A.R.A. complete freedom and priority without cost in the use of existing radio, telegraph, telephone, cable, post, and couriers in Russia and will provide the A.R.A., when available and subject to the consent of competent authorities, with private telegraph and telephone wires and maintenance free of cost.

*Seventeenth:* To accord the A.R.A. and its American representatives and its couriers the customary diplomatic privileges as to passing the frontiers.

*Eighteenth:* To supply the A.R.A. free of cost with the necessary gasoline and oil to operate its motor transportation and to transport such motor transportation by rail or otherwise as may be necessary.

*Nineteenth:* To furnish at the request of the competent A.R.A. Authorities all A.R.A. personnel, together with their impediments and supplies, free transportation in Russia.

*Twentieth:* To permit the A.R.A. to import and re-export free of duty and requisition such commissary, transport and office supplies as are necessary for its personnel and administration.

*Twenty-first:* That they will acquaint the Russian people with the aims and methods of the relief work of the A.R.A. in order to facilitate the rapid development of its efficiency and will assist and facilitate in supplying the American people with reliable and non-

political information of the existing conditions and the progress of the relief work as an aid in developing financial support in America.

*Twenty-second:* That they will bear all expenses of the relief operation other than

A. Cost of relief supplies at port (See paragraph 4).

B. Direct expenses of American control and supervision of relief work in Russia with exceptions as above. In general they will give the A.R.A. all assistance in their power toward the carrying out of its humanitarian relief operations.

The A.R.A. agrees:—

*Twenty-third:* Within the limits of its resources and facilities, to supply, as rapidly as suitable organization can be effected, food, clothing and medical relief to the sick and particularly to the children within the age limits as decided upon by the A.R.A.

*Twenty-fourth:* That its relief distribution will be to the children and sick without regard to race, religion or social or political status.

*Twenty-fifth:* That its personnel in Russia will confine themselves strictly to the ministration of relief and will engage in no political or commercial activity whatever. In view of paragraph (1) and the freedom of American personnel in Russia from personal search, arrest and detention, any personnel contravening this will be withdrawn or discharged on the request of the Central Soviet Authorities. The Central Soviet Authorities will submit to the chief officer of the A.R.A. the reasons for this request and the evidence in their possession.

*Twenty-sixth:* That it will carry on its operations where it finds its relief can be administered most efficiently and to secure best results. Its principal object is to bring relief to the famine stricken areas of the Volga.

*Twenty-seventh:* That it will import no alcohol in its relief supplies and will permit customs inspection of its imported relief supplies at points to be mutually agreed upon.

The Soviet Authorities having previously agreed as the absolute sine qua non of any assistance on the part of the American people to release all Americans detained in Russia and to facilitate the departure from Russia of all Americans so desiring, the A.R.A. reserves to itself the right to suspend temporarily or terminate all of its relief work in Russia in case of failure on the part of the Soviet Authorities to fully comply with this primary condition or with any condition set forth in the above agreement. The Soviet Authorities equally reserve the right of cancelling this Agreement in case of non-fulfillment of any of the above clauses on the part of the A.R.A.

Made in Riga, August Twentieth, Nineteen hundred and Twenty-one  
On behalf of Council of Peoples Commissaries of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

(Signed) MAXIM LITVINOV,

Assistant Peoples Commissary for Foreign Affairs.

(Signed) WALTER LYMAN BROWN

On behalf of the American Relief Administration

Director for Europe.

## DOCUMENT II

## EUROPEAN RELIEF COUNCIL AGREEMENT

A meeting of the European Council was held in Washington, on August 24, 1921, at which representatives from all the member organizations were present. The Council comprises:

The American Relief Administration  
American Friends Service Committee  
American Red Cross  
Federal Council of the Churches of  
Christ in America  
Jewish Joint Distribution Committee  
Knights of Columbus  
Young Men's Christian Association  
Young Women's Christian Association  
The National Catholic Welfare  
Council

It was decided that inasmuch as the whole problem was apparently beyond the resources of private charity, the work of the Associations represented at this meeting would in its initial stages be directed in priority toward children and in medical supplies, and the following memorandum was accepted by all the organizations represented:

- "(a) The agreement between the American Relief Administration and the Soviet Authorities at Riga is accepted by the associations affiliated in the European Relief Council and all activities will be according to this agreement.
- "(b) The Director of the American Relief Administration in Russia will assign to the American Friends Service Committee, which is now conducting relief work in Russia a definite district or area of distribution in which the American Friends Service Committee shall keep their own identity and work according to their own ideals but always under the supervision of the Director of the American Relief Administration in Russia, pursuant to and in conformity with the terms of the Riga agreement.
- "(c) The Director of the American Relief Administration in Russia shall appoint on his staff at headquarters, one or more representatives (to be mutually agreed) of any of the organization members of the European Relief Council. In turn, the member organizations who may be represented in Russia agree to furnish such representatives. The object of this arrangement is to secure complete coöperation and coördination among the different organizations.
- "(d) Each of the distributing organizations is to conduct all relations with the Central Soviet authorities through or with the approval of the Director of the American Relief Administration in Russia.
- "(e) The Director of the American Relief Administration in Russia is to have the same authority over the personnel of



all distributing organizations as incorporated in the Riga agreement.

- “(f) The relief is being furnished by the American people and the different distributing associations shall use appropriate words and means so to designate it.
- “(g) The associations in the United States shall be individually guided by their own views as to the collection of funds.
- “(h) It is understood that the purchasing, transportation and warehouse facilities of the American Relief Administration, both inside and outside Russia, are open to each distributing organization at cost to the American Relief Administration.”

### DOCUMENT III

#### AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION AND THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

New York

2 September 1921

At a conference held in the New York Office of the American Relief Administration September 2nd, called for the purpose of defining the detailed relationship of the American Red Cross and the Russian Relief Program of the American Relief Administration. The following were in attendance:

Mr. Edgar Rickard, Col. William N. Haskell, Col. J. W. Krueger, Col. Henry Beeuwkes and Major W. P. Davenport represented the American Relief Administration, and Messrs. G. A. Sloane and B. A. Harlan the American Red Cross.

The selection and financial responsibility for the furnishing of all medical and hospital supplies for the Russian Relief Program rests with the American Red Cross up to the amount of their funds set aside for this purpose, viz., approximately \$3,000,000.

The actual procurement by purchase, or otherwise, of the medical and hospital supplies shall be in the hands of the American Red Cross, which includes authority given to the Medical Director in Russia by the American Red Cross to secure locally such supplies as he may think advantageous.

All medical and hospital supplies procured by the American Relief Administration are to be delivered to the designated representatives of the American Relief Administration in New York City, freight prepaid to New York, all goods to be marked in accordance with instructions previously furnished and to be packed for export. Ocean freight, insurance, etc., to the port of entry in Russia is to be paid by the American Relief Administration and billed against the American Red Cross. In addition to shipping marks, all packages and parcels will bear the Red Cross emblem and the wording “From the American Red Cross for A.R.A. Russian Relief.”

The American Red Cross will assume the responsibility for transportation from Paris, or other European points, to port of entry in Russia of all medical or hospital supplies procured in Europe. This

includes such supplies requisitioned directly through the American Relief Administration, as well as supplies procured by the American Relief Administration Medical Director. The A.R.A. will bill any charges which may be incurred for these purposes to the American Red Cross.

All expenses incurred by the American Relief Administration inside of Russia incidental to the handling, transportation and distribution of medical and hospital supplies will be assumed by the A.R.A.

It was further understood that the American Red Cross National Headquarters requested their European Commission Headquarters at Paris to have available for the Russian Relief Medical Director, upon arrival in Paris, if possible, on or about September 10th, the following lists:

1. Such surplus general relief supplies as may be the basis of an outright donation to the American Relief Administration program in Russia, provided such donation will be consistent with the plans of the American Red Cross European Commission.
2. A list of such medical supplies as may be immediately available from the present American Red Cross Child Health stocks for the American Relief Administration program in Russia. These supplies are to be later replaced as a charge against the American Red Cross appropriation for Russian Relief, and
3. A list of such supplies as in his opinion may be purchased at an advantage in Europe.

Inspection of medical and hospital supplies will rest with the American Red Cross with the exception of such supplies as are donated free. Arrangements for inspection of such supplies will be determined later. In the opinion of Col. Beeuwkes inspection can be eliminated on Army medical supplies with the exception of valuable drugs or surgical instruments.

The Medical Director in Russia will approve all charges and expenditures incurred for account of the American Red Cross in Russia.

All personnel now employed on the staff of the Medical Director in Russia, and also such additional personnel up to a limited number, i.e., ten, will be paid by the American Relief Administration.

All requisitions and cable communications of the Medical Department will be handled through the London and New York Offices of the American Relief Administration and transmitted to and from the American Red Cross National Headquarters in Washington.

All detailed expenses such as cablegrams, clerical work in the offices of the American Relief Administration, etc., will be borne by the American Relief Administration.

The head of the American Relief Administration in Russia will cable New York through London at the close of business on the last day of each month the approximate total cost of all medical and hospital supplies purchased or contracted for during the preceding monthly period (without taking into consideration any cash payments). This report should also include the total commitments of the Medical Department incurred up to that date as a check on the total commitments against the American Red Cross appropriation. This information will be transmitted to the American Red Cross National Headquarters, Washington. The above does not include such supplies as are secured

from the American Red Cross in Paris. Inasmuch as these commitments will be reported directly by the Paris American Red Cross office to National Headquarters, Washington, the American Red Cross will keep the American Relief Administration in New York fully informed of all commitments incurred against the American Red Cross appropriation for Russian Relief either through procurements made in Europe or the United States. (This is subject to any later changes as may be agreed upon after the Accounting Departments of the respective organizations have been consulted.)

The American Relief Administration in Russia will submit through its London Office for the attention of the American Red Cross at regular monthly intervals, a report of the distribution of medical and hospital supplies. The American Relief Administration in New York will furnish the American Red Cross with reports of all shipments of medical and hospital supplies forwarded to Europe.

All applications for employment in the Medical Department, Russia, will be submitted to the American Red Cross for acknowledgment and file, it being understood that all applicants will be advised that for the present the vacancies in the medical service have been filled.

The American Red Cross would be pleased to receive from the American Relief Administration from time to time such reports as may be received in New York from their Russian Headquarters covering the distribution of the medical and hospital supplies, which information may be useful to the A.R.C. for the purpose of keeping its membership fully informed of its activities.

#### DOCUMENT IV

### FOOD DRAFT (REMITTANCE) AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION AND THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC

WHEREAS a famine condition exists in parts of Russia and

WHEREAS the American Relief Administration, an unofficial volunteer, charitable organization under the chairmanship of Mr. Herbert Hoover, has concluded an Agreement with the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic which covers the conditions under which the American Relief Administration is now rendering aid to the children of Russia, and

WHEREAS it is desirable to increase by every legitimate means possible the resources of the American Relief Administration in order that the volume of foodstuffs for Russia may be increased and a greater number of children provided for

THEREFORE it is agreed between the American Relief Administration, hereinafter called the A.R.A., and the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, hereinafter called the Soviet Government.

*First:* That the American Relief Administration will organize in conjunction with and in addition to its child-feeding operations, the American Relief Administration Warehouses.

*Second:* The establishment of the American Relief Administra-



tion warehouses will be in accordance with the terms as hereafter laid down and agreed to by the American Relief Administration and the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

*Third:* (a) That food drafts will be sold or credits otherwise established in dollars outside of Soviet Russia and that food will be turned over to the beneficiaries of said drafts or credits in Russia at designated American Relief Administration warehouses upon presentation of good and sufficient documents.

(b) In view of the uncertain condition of postal and express deliveries within Russia, the American Relief Administration reserves the right to refuse to sell food drafts or to open credits abroad, or to deliver any commodities within Soviet Russia to any individuals or organizations which it may designate. In cases where the American Relief Administration refuses to deliver commodities in Soviet Russia, they will refund to the purchaser the full amount paid by him on all undelivered foodstuffs which he may have purchased from the A.R.A.

(c) The A.R.A. will ship all food to Russia in bulk and make up such packages of values approximately \$10.00 or multiples thereof as may be necessary within the borders of Soviet Russia. The food used for warehouse deliveries will be from additional stocks imported especially for this purpose, which stocks will be in excess of, but interchangeable with, those required for child-feeding. This will in no way reduce the amount of food delivered in Russia for child-feeding as provided for in the Riga Agreement, but will on the other hand increase the total amount of foodstuffs delivered in Russia, and will increase the number of children that can be cared for.

*Fourth:* The American Relief Administration agrees:

(a) That it will appropriate for the feeding of Russian children in Russia through its existing machinery all net profits accruing from its warehouse operations in Soviet Russia.

(b) That it will bear all costs of transportation, loading, discharge and handling of warehouse supplies except transportation of same within the borders of Soviet Russia.

(c) That in case it decides to deliver food packages to points beyond established A.R.A. warehouses, use will be made of the regular Russian Post system if same is found practicable.

(d) That for purposes of this agreement that such American personnel as may be required for warehouse operations will be on the same basis as American personnel referred to in the agreement drawn between the American Relief Administration and the Soviet Government in Riga, Latvia, on August 20, 1921.

(e) That the Soviet Authorities may have one or more officials in the A.R.A. warehouse offices or warehouses, to see that no abuses or speculations in the A.R.A. foodstuffs occur.

(f) For the exclusive purpose of preventing speculation or misuse of foodstuffs imported by the American Relief Administration, the Soviet Government, acting through its representative with the A.R.A., has the right to forbid delivery in whole or in part of any consignment of commodities of any quantity, to any persons, organizations or institutions, on which it has good and sufficient proof of misuse or speculation, in which case the American Relief Administration will refund to the purchaser in America to the extent of any undelivered amounts.

*Fifth:* The Soviet Government agrees:

(a) That the American Relief Administration warehouse supplies shall be admitted to Soviet Russia free of all duties, tolls, or taxes.

(b) That all A.R.A. warehouse supplies shall be free from requisition or seizure on the part of the Soviet Government or its agents.

(c) That reimbursement of the A.R.A., in United States currency of actual cost, or replacement in kind, will be made for any supplies misused in violation of paragraph FIVE, sub-paragraph (b) of this Agreement.

(d) That all American Relief Administration warehouse supplies shall be considered supplementary and free from ration regulations either by the Central Authorities or by the local Soviets.

(e) That in view of the existing food shortage the A.R.A. warehouse supplies shall be transported free of cost to such points within Soviet Russia as the A.R.A. may designate.

(f) That the A.R.A. shall be furnished with suitable free storage for its warehouse supplies.

(g) That the A.R.A. may deliver against payments as hereinabove outlined food packages or food in "bulk sale lots" to individuals, municipalities, and to charitable and other organizations within Soviet Russia; except that in case an individual receives orders for delivery of more than \$50 worth of foodstuffs at any one time, or an organization receives orders for delivery of more than \$500 worth of foodstuffs at any one time, this must be advised to the Soviet representative with the A.R.A. who, in case he has evidence that the food will be misused or become the subject of speculation, may determine that the foodstuffs shall not be delivered.

(h) That the Soviet authorities agree to let it be known officially in America that they are in complete accord with the establishment of this warehouse operation.

(i) That the Soviet authorities agree to afford internal publicity concerning the warehouse operation, its object, and the details of its operations.

That this Agreement may be terminated by either party after ninety days' notice to the other party.

For the American Relief Administration

By: (Signed) WILLIAM N. HASKELL,  
Director in Russia.

For the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic

By: (Signed) L. KAMENEV

Made this 19th day of October, 1921.

## DOCUMENT V

Moscow, Russia,  
December 1, 1921.

### FOOD REMITTANCE MEMORANDUM NO. 2.

1. In order to purchase a Food Remittance in America an APPLICATION FORM must be obtained from the Russian Food Remittance Department of the American Relief Administration, 42 Broadway,

New York City. In Europe all purchases must be made by application to the American Relief Administration, 67 Eaton Square, London, S.W.1, England.

These APPLICATION FORMS must be filled out and returned to the New York or London Offices accompanied by Money Order, Draft or Certified Check for dollars. On receipt of the completed Application Form a "FOOD REMITTANCE RECEIPT" is issued which has a special number and contains in addition to the applicant's name and address, the consignee's name and address in both English and Russian, as well as the necessary data concerning the amount in dollars which indicates the number of packages to be delivered.

2. *TWO Copies* of this "Food Remittance Receipt," viz.: a BLUE COPY for permanent retention in MOSCOW HEADQUARTERS, and a WHITE COPY for signature and return to New York by the Delivery Station, are forwarded to Russia.

3. These Food Remittance Receipts upon arrival at Moscow are sorted according to geographic location and the WHITE COPY is sent to the DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS from which the delivery of food can most easily be effected, accompanied by a "FOOD REMITTANCE REGISTER" listing the receipts.

This Food Remittance Register contains:

- (a) *A special DISTRICT SERIAL NUMBER which is given each remittance in Moscow, and*
- (b) *The ORIGINAL Food Remittance Receipt number.*
- (c) *The amount in Dollars.*

It also contains headings under which notations concerning the delivery or non-delivery of the package should be made.

4. *Upon receipt from Moscow of the Food Remittance Receipt the Districts will notify the Consignee by Post Card that a package is being held at the local A.R.A. Food Remittance Warehouse subject to his disposition, and asking him to take delivery in one of three ways. It is very important that the Receipt number be noted on all three sections of the Post Card Notice in order that on return of any section the Food Remittance Receipt, which should be kept filed by Receipt number, can be readily located.*

5. Delivery of packages to Consignee may be effected in three ways:

- (A) *BY ACTUAL DELIVERY TO THE CONSIGNEE OVER THE COUNTER.*

A.R.A. Food Remittance Depots have been or are to be established at the following points, viz.:

Petrograd  
Moscow  
Kazan  
Simbirsk  
Ufa  
Samara  
Saratov  
Orenburg  
Tzaritzin  
Odessa  
Kiev  
Minsk



## THE FAMINE IN SOVIET RUSSIA

Consignees *must* call at these depots for their packages. No deliveries beyond such points will be made by the A.R.A. except by Post which will be described below.

The method to be followed in Counter Deliveries will be as follows:

1. The Consignee will call at the local A.R.A. Food Remittance Depot and present the Post Card Notice, together with documentary evidence to prove that he is the person named in the Food Remittance Receipt. If such evidence is satisfactory the Consignee will sign "DELIVERY ORDERS" in duplicate, and the FOOD REMITTANCE RECEIPT. (This may be done in a single operation by insertion of the Food Remittance Receipt and a piece of carbon paper between the Delivery Orders.) The date of delivery and the District (Food Station) should be filled in in the Food Remittance Receipt. The District, the Receipt and serial numbers, date of delivery, and method of delivery, as well as the amount in dollars and the list of commodities should be filled in the Delivery orders, the duplicate copy of which goes to the consignee, and the original copy of which remains in District Headquarters as a permanent record. Rubber stamps will be furnished for the list of commodities.
2. The Consignee will also sign (giving both his name and correct address) a *Post Card addressed to the ORIGINAL PURCHASER of the Receipt acknowledging receipt of the foodstuffs.*

This will complete the operation as far as the Consignee is concerned. The Food Remittance Receipt will then be ready to return to Moscow, in connection with the Food station Delivery Report, to be described below, the transaction having been noted on the Food Remittance Register.

(B) *BY ACTUAL DELIVERY TO CONSIGNEE'S AGENT.*

1. In cases where the Consignee is unable to take personal delivery and desires the package delivered to an *AGENT*, the Agent must present the appropriate section of the Post Card Notice, duly signed by the Consignee, together with the Consignee's IDENTIFICATION PAPERS. The Agent will then follow the procedure outlined above, except that he will sign the Food Remittance Receipt, the Delivery Orders and the Acknowledgment Post Card as *Agent* of the Consignee, giving both his own and the Consignee's name.
2. The Agent's authorization from the Consignee should be attached to the back of the Food Remittance Receipt, together with the Post Card acknowledgment, stamped "AGENT," for forwarding to Moscow, with the Food Station Delivery Report.

(C) *BY RUSSIAN POST AND TELEGRAPH SERVICE.*

In cases where the Consignee is unable to take personal delivery or to send an Agent, and desires the package sent by post, the following procedure should be followed:

1. Upon receipt of that section of the Post Card which requests that the package be sent by post at the Consignee's risk, the foodstuffs, properly packed, will be turned over to the local RUSSIAN POST & TELEGRAPH SERVICE for shipment.
2. Postage and insurance will be borne by the A.R.A. but after making delivery of the package to the Post Office and securing their receipt, A.R.A. liability ceases. This is understood by the Consignee.
3. The Consignee will be notified by Post Card that the package has been shipped. This Post Card will be in two sections, one indicating that the food packages have been consigned per post, and the other in the form of a post card acknowledgment to be returned to the purchaser. This section of the card should bear the purchaser's address already written in its proper place, and when signed by the Consignee after receipt of package will be detached from the rest of the card, placed in an envelope and mailed to the A.R.A. distribution point, for transmission to Moscow the same as ordinary acknowledgment cards intended for the purchaser. Obviously in this case no duplicate Delivery Order need be made.
4. The Food Remittance Receipt will be stamped "Shipped per post," dated, and attached to
  - (a) The Post Card received from the Consignee authorizing shipment of the package at his risk, and
  - (b) The Post Office Receipt, for return to Moscow in connection with the Food Station Delivery Report.
5. *No package should be sent by post until Post Card authorization to ship has been received from the Consignee.* As arrangements for transmission and insurance of packages have not been completed, no post consignments will for the present be made.

6. *FOOD STATION DELIVERY REPORT* (Details omitted).

7. "DAILY DELIVERY LISTS" have been printed for use in the warehouse where the packages are to be actually delivered. These can be made out daily as deliveries occur, in pencil, and later sent to District Headquarters offices where the Food Station Delivery Report can be typed.

8. *UNDELIVERED PACKAGES (REFUNDS)*

In the Food Remittance Receipts sold by the American Relief Administration in New York is a clause providing for a refund to the Purchaser in the event of the package not being delivered in ninety (90) days. This clause means ninety (90) days from date Food Remittance Receipt arrives in Moscow, and the ninety days will be considered to start from the date appearing in the upper right hand corner of the Food Remittance Register.

Every effort should be made to get into touch with the Consignee and each District should work out a system in coöperation with the local Russian Post & Telegraph Service to insure the most careful handling of Post Card Notices.

There undoubtedly will be many cases where the Consignee while still in the City or District will have moved from the address given in the Food Remittance Receipt. In such cases the Post Office Department and local Government Address Information Bureaus should be called upon to assist in locating the Consignee.

A follow-up checking system on the Post Card notifications should be instituted.

If, at the end of thirty (30) days no reply is received from the Consignee, a second Post Card should be mailed. The Post Office authorities should at the same time be given the name and address of the Consignee and asked to locate.

If, at the end of another thirty days no reply is received and the Post Office Department has not located the Consignee, a third Post Card should be mailed, at the same time the Address or Information Bureaus of the local Government should be asked to assist.

If, at the expiration of ninety (90) days all efforts to locate the Consignee have been unsuccessful, the Food Remittance Receipt should be stamped "REFUND" and returned to Moscow together with "REPORT ON PACKAGES UNDELIVERED."

This form should be made out monthly in duplicate (one copy for the local files and one copy for Moscow) and should give the District Serial Number, Food Remittance Number and, in addition, indicate the reason the package was not delivered.

#### 9. UNDELIVERED PACKAGES (TRANSFERS)

Due to various causes, such as change of address, mistakes in listing, Consignee wishing someone else to receive package, postal communication, transportation, et cetera, it will probably be found necessary to transfer Food Remittance Receipts from one District to another in order to effect delivery. This will be accomplished by direct communication between the Districts and not through the Central Office, Moscow.

Care should be taken that no unnecessary transfer on account of postal connections be made. Likewise, in case of transfers made at the request of Consignees, signed statement to that effect should be attached to the Food Remittance Receipt. Change of address should be definitely ascertained from reliable sources before a transfer on that account is made. When the District finds it necessary to transfer Food Remittance Receipts to another District, the District making the transfer will use the following procedure:

(1) Form No. MW-10 will be made out in triplicate addressed to the District where delivery is to be effected. The original is to accompany the Food Remittance Receipt, which has been stamped "TRANSFERRED TO," one copy is to be forwarded to Moscow for information and the third copy is to be retained for file locally and should be filed in the file of accomplished Food Remittance Receipts to replace the Food Remittance Receipt. It is to be emphasized that the copy for Central Office, Moscow, must be forwarded as soon as possible.

(2) Enter the transaction on Food Remittance Register received from Moscow, Column "Transferred to" after the proper receipt number, date and place to which transferred. The District receiving the Food Remittance Receipt transferred from some other



point will enter same on a blank Food Remittance Register marked "Transfers Received," and kept specially for the purpose, giving the original serial number, e.g., Moscow, 30, Simbirsk, 31, et cetera. Food Remittance Registers for transfers received should be made out from time to time as transfers accumulate, and must be in duplicate—one copy for local use, and one copy to be forwarded Moscow. Thus, Moscow is notified of the transfer and it also appears on the records of the District and is ready to be handled the same as an ordinary case except that the serial number bears its original prefix.

10. Packages are sold only in units of \$10 or multiples of \$10. The contents of a package are as follows:

49 pounds of Flour  
25 pounds of Rice  
10 pounds of Sugar  
10 pounds of Lard  
3 pounds of Tea  
20 tins of Milk

While the contents of all packages are the same, there may be a difference in the method in which foodstuffs for counter delivery and foodstuffs for postal delivery will be packed.

(a) Foodstuffs for counter delivery will as far as practicable be packed as follows:

*Each Consignee will,  
therefore, receive:*

Flour in 24½ pound sacks	2 sacks
Rice in 25 pound sacks	1 sack
Sugar in 10 pound sacks	1 sack
Lard in 10 pound pails	1 pail
Tea in ½ or 1½ pound packets	6 or 2 packets
Milk in tins	20 tins

(b) Foodstuffs for delivery by Post will be packed in two equal and identical boxes and each box will contain one-half the total quantity of each commodity, i.e.,

Flour	—24½ pound sack
Rice	—12½ " "
Sugar	— 5 " "
Lard	— 5 " pail
Tea	— 3 - ½ " packets, or 1-1½ pound packet.

Two boxes must, therefore, be shipped to Consignee in order to make up a \$10 food package. Due to cost of boxes and packing expenses, under no circumstances will commodities boxed for shipment per post be delivered over the counter.

For the present, all packages, both for counter and postal deliveries, will be made up at Moscow. The boxes for postal delivery will be forwarded from Moscow ready for reshipment to the Consignee. No shipment of foodstuffs in bulk will be made to the Districts.

## II. PUBLICITY.

The Success of the Food Remittance Division will depend on the ability of the A.R.A. to locate persons in Russia and to put Russians in touch with their relatives and friends in America. To this end a campaign of publicity is being prepared to consist of newspaper stories

and dispatches sent out through Central News Agencies and printed in local papers, placards and appeal Post Cards. The placards are to be posted in cities where food remittance distributing points are established. Appeal Post Cards will be distributed from information bureaus opened in connection with each delivery depot and can be sent to persons in more remote parts of the country through the post. When the Appeal Post Cards are signed, addressed and stamped by the sender, they are to be collected and returned to Moscow for transmission to America. Mr. Farmer Murphy is preparing newspaper notices which will be sent to all Districts for publication in local papers.

ELMER BURLAND,  
Chief Food Remittance Division.

## DOCUMENT VI

### AN ACT OF CONGRESS AUTHORIZING THE APPROPRIATION OF A SUM NOT TO EXCEED \$20,000,000 FOR RUSSIAN RELIEF

(Public—No. 117—67th Congress)  
(H. R. 9548)

An Act for the relief of the distressed and starving people of Russia.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the President is hereby authorized, through such agency or agencies as he may designate, to purchase in the United States and transport and distribute corn, seed grain, and preserved milk for the relief of the distressed and starving people of Russia and for spring planting in areas where seed grains have been exhausted. The President is hereby authorized to expend or cause to be expended, out of the funds of the United States Grain Corporation, a sum not exceeding \$20,000,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act: *Provided*, That the President shall, not later than December 31, 1922, submit to the Congress an itemized and detailed report of the expenditures and activities made and conducted through the agencies selected by him, under the authority of this Act: *Provided further*, That the commodities above enumerated so purchased shall be transported to their destination in vessels of the United States, either those privately owned or owned by the United States Shipping Board.

Approved, December 22, 1921.

## DOCUMENT VII

EXECUTIVE ORDER APPOINTING THE PURCHASING  
COMMISSION FOR RUSSIAN RELIEF

By virtue of an act of Congress entitled "An Act for the Relief of the Distressed and Starving People of Russia," approved December 22, 1921, I, Warren G. Harding, President of the United States, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of said act, hereby appoint,

The Secretary of Commerce,  
James P. Goodrich, of Indiana,  
Edward M. Flesh, of Missouri,  
Edgar Rickard, of New York,  
Don Livingston, of South Dakota,

as a commission to be known as the "Purchasing Commission for Russian Relief," and designate such Commission as the agency for the purpose of the purchase, transport, and delivery of "corn, seed grain, and preserved milk, for the relief of the distressed and starving people of Russia, and for spring planting in areas where seed grains have been exhausted." Overseas transport to be under the provisions of said Act.

I hereby authorize said Commission to purchase said commodities from time to time and in such amount as may be found necessary to carry out the purpose of this Act and not exceeding the amount mentioned in said Act.

I further authorize and direct the United States Grain Corporation to act as the fiscal agency of said Commission and to pay out of its available funds all bills and obligations incurred, but all under the direction of said Commission in the purchase, transport, and delivery of the aforesaid commodities provided, however, that the total amount so expended by the United States Grain Corporation for such purposes shall not exceed the sum of \$20,000,000.

I further authorize and direct the American Relief Administration to accept from the Purchasing Commission for Russian Relief, the said commodities so purchased and transported and to distribute the same in Russia for the purposes set out in this Act, and by such methods and means and to such places and persons as it in its discretion may determine. On the completion of the work contemplated in said Act and herein designated, the said Grain Corporation shall render to the President of the United States not later than the 15th day of December, 1922, an itemized and detailed report of the expenditures incurred by it, and the said American Relief Administration shall not later than said date submit to the President a report of the work conducted by it under the authority of said Act and this Executive Order.

WARREN G. HARDING.

The White House  
December 24, 1921.



## DOCUMENT VIII

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION AND THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC COVERING THE DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF TO THE ADULT POPULATION OF THE FAMINE REGIONS OF RUSSIA

Designated by the President of the United States as the distributing agency of the fund of Twenty Million (\$20,000,000) Dollars voted by the Congress of the United States for the relief of the famine-stricken population of Russia, the American Relief Administration desires to bring food, grain, and perhaps seed, into Russia, and distribute it at its discretion to the general adult population of the famine areas.

The provisions of the Riga Agreement of August 20th, 1921, are extended to cover this expansion of the work of the American Relief Administration in Russia in this effort on the part of the American people to assist the population of the famine areas and to prevent a recurrence of the present situation.

Made at London, December 30th, 1921.

On behalf of the American Relief Administration:

WALTER LYMAN BROWN,  
Director for Europe.

On behalf of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic:

LEONID KRASSIN.

## DOCUMENT IX

ACT OF CONGRESS AUTHORIZING THE PRESIDENT TO TRANSFER CERTAIN MEDICAL SUPPLIES FOR THE RELIEF OF THE DISTRESSED AND FAMINE STRICKEN PEOPLE OF RUSSIA

(Public—No. 129—67th Congress)

An Act to authorize the President to transfer certain medical supplies for the relief of the distressed and famine stricken people of Russia.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the President be, and he is hereby authorized to transfer, without charge therefor, out of the surplus supplies of the War and other departments of the Government, to American relief organizations to be selected by him, medicines, medical, surgical and hospital supplies, for the relief of the distressed and famine stricken people of Russia, in an amount not to exceed \$4,000,000 original cost to the United States and as may be delivered to and accepted by such relief organizations, without cost for

transportation to the United States, within four months of the date of the passage of this Act.

Approved, January 20, 1922.

## DOCUMENT X

**EXECUTIVE ORDER DIRECTING THAT SURPLUS GOVERNMENT STOCKS OF MEDICINES, MEDICAL, SURGICAL AND HOSPITAL SUPPLIES BE DELIVERED TO THE AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION FOR RUSSIAN RELIEF**

By virtue of an Act of Congress entitled "An Act to authorize the President to transfer certain medical supplies for the relief of the distressed and famine stricken people of Russia," approved January 20, 1922, I, Warren G. Harding, President of the United States, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of said Act, hereby select, designate and appoint the American Relief Administration as the relief organization to receive from the War, Navy and Treasury Departments, and the United States Shipping Board, out of the surplus supplies of said Departments, medicines, medical, surgical and hospital supplies for the relief of the distressed and famine stricken people of Russia, in an amount not to exceed four million dollars original cost to the United States, and as may be delivered to and accepted by such American Relief Association without cost for transportation to the United States, provided said medicines, medical, surgical, and hospital supplies are delivered to the American Relief Administration within four months from the date of the passage of said Act.

I further authorize and direct the American Relief Administration, upon delivery to and acceptance by it of the medicines, medical, surgical, and hospital supplies provided for and in said Act, to transport to, and to distribute the same in, Russia for the purposes set out in the Act, and by such methods and means and to such places and persons as it, in its discretion, may determine. Provided, that in making such distribution, the American Relief Administration may, in its discretion, if it believes there are other American relief organizations ministering to the relief of the suffering people of Russia that are better able to distribute such supplies in certain localities than the American Relief Administration, turn over such supplies in such amounts, to such other American relief organizations.

I further direct that the War, Navy and Treasury Departments, and the United States Shipping Board, shall report to the President the amounts of medicines, medical, surgical and hospital supplies delivered by each to the American Relief Administration, and the American Relief Administration shall make report as to the disposition made of said supplies.

WARREN G. HARDING.

THE WHITE HOUSE,  
January 24, 1922.

## DOCUMENT XI

## AGREEMENT COVERING THE PURCHASE OF FOOD SUPPLIES AND SEED IN AMERICA BY THE AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION FOR THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC

In view of the famine existing in parts of Russia, and with a view to assisting in the alleviation of the same, the AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION (hereinafter called the "A.R.A.") is prepared to assist the RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC (hereinafter called the "Soviet Authorities") in the purchase of food supplies and seed from America on the distinct understanding that food so purchased shall be used for the relief of the general famine situation in the Volga Region. The general terms of this assistance by the A.R.A. are:

*First:* The Soviet Authorities will place at the disposition of the A.R.A. gold to the value of Ten Million (\$10,000,000) Dollars for the purchase of food supplies and seed in America.

*Second:* The A.R.A. will purchase and ship foodstuffs and seeds as requested by the Soviet Authorities up to the above Ten Million (\$10,000,000) Dollars as made available by the Soviet Authorities for this transaction.

*Third:* The A.R.A. will ship such relief supplies to Russian ports or to the nearest practical ports in adjacent countries as designated by the Soviet Authorities, debiting the realized amount of gold in possession of the A.R.A. with the cost of such supplies shipped on usual conditions c.i.f. delivery. The A.R.A. will take no responsibility for damage or shortages but will insure in the ordinary manner collecting any damages possible for credit of the Soviet Authorities.

*Fourth:* All orders of purchase will be given the A.R.A. by the Soviet Authorities through the Delegation in London and through the Agents of this Delegation Messrs. Arcos Limited, or through such other machinery as may be set up in mutual agreement.

*Fifth:* As greatest speed in delivering these food supplies and seeds to the Volga Basin is imperative the Soviet Authorities undertake to place buying with the A.R.A. at a monthly rate of not less than one-third of the total of Ten Million (\$10,000,000) Dollars so as to insure complete purchase of Ten Million (\$10,000,000) Dollars worth of supplies within ninety (90) days of the signing of this agreement. An order for not less than the full first month's supplies, being one-third of the total, will be given within five (5) days of the signing of this agreement with similar orders to follow at intervals of not more than thirty (30) days.

*Sixth:* The A.R.A. will use its best discretion in the purchase and shipment of these supplies but will in no way be liable for market fluctuations or other contingencies.

*Seventh:* To cover the immediate placing of orders and to guarantee purchases until gold is available the Soviet Authorities will within five (5) days of the signing of this agreement open an irrevocable



credit of Three Million Five Hundred Thousand (\$3,500,000) Dollars in favor of the A.R.A. with the London Branch of the Guaranty Trust Company of New York.

*Eighth:* The Soviet Authorities will immediately put in hand a shipment of gold for delivery to the A.R.A. at Stockholm. The A.R.A. will ship this gold to America and on establishment there of its value will release the irrevocable credit established under paragraph "Seventh" above to the extent of its realized value, less charges. The A.R.A. will handle the gold from receipt at Stockholm arranging shipment, insurance, realization, etc., charging same to the Soviet Authorities against gold received from them.

*Ninth:* The Soviet Authorities undertake to deliver to the A.R.A. the full amount of gold to the value of Ten Million (\$10,000,000) Dollars in three equal monthly deliveries within ninety (90) days of the signing of this agreement but reserve the right to make total deliveries as much more rapidly as they desire. Following the release of the irrevocable credit established under Paragraph "Seventh" should further gold deliveries not be available in sufficient time and quantity to cover monthly orders placed under Paragraph "Fifth" the Soviet Authorities will re-open in the same manner as in Paragraph "Seventh" further irrevocable credits to cover such purchases until such time as sufficient gold has been realized.

*Tenth:* The Soviet Authorities guarantee that the gold used in this transaction has been in the possession of the Russian Treasury since the beginning of the war in August, 1914.

*Eleventh:* The A.R.A. will accept in payment for these purchases American gold coin at its par value, foreign gold coins or bullion at their fine gold content at standard United States of America mint price.

*Twelfth:* The Soviet Authorities undertake that the foodstuffs and seeds purchased under this scheme will be used for the relief of the general famine situation in the Volga Famine Region or for Refugees from that region. Full information to the satisfaction of the A.R.A. as to the disposition of foodstuffs so purchased shall be submitted by the Soviet Authorities to the Moscow Office of the A.R.A.

*Thirteenth:* In order to coördinate the distribution of the relief supplies purchased under this scheme with the relief programs of the A.R.A. and avoid overlap, the Soviet Authorities will, through the proper Governmental Department, allocate these supplies in advance of arrival at port in mutual agreement with the Moscow Office of the A.R.A.

*Fourteenth:* The Soviet Authorities hereby agree to their full understanding that this is not a commercial or trade transaction and acknowledge that the A.R.A. are giving their services without charge or profit as a measure to secure maximum food relief to the Russian people.

Made in London this thirtieth day of December, nineteen hundred and twenty-one

On Behalf of the A.R.A., WALTER LYMAN BROWN,  
Director for Europe.

On Behalf of the R.S.F.S.R., LEONID KRASSIN,  
People's Commissar for Foreign Trade.

## DOCUMENT XII

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE AMERICAN RELIEF  
ADMINISTRATION  
and the  
UKRAINIAN SOVIET REPUBLIC

Whereas, the American Relief Administration, an unofficial volunteer American charitable organization under the chairmanship of Mr. Herbert Hoover, is bringing food and medical relief to the famine-stricken population in Russia under an agreement entered into with the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic at Riga, August 20th, 1921, and

Whereas, the Ukrainian SOVIET Republic declares itself not a party to nor obligated by the agreement referred to above and the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic concurs in this declaration of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic and

Whereas, the American Relief Administration may find it possible and desirable, even though its resources are pledged almost wholly to the Relief of the famine situation in the Volga Valley, to bring some assistance, particularly medical, to the people of the Ukraine.

Therefore, it is agreed that the Ukrainian Soviet Republic (hereinafter called the Ukrainian Authorities) will extend to the American Relief Administration (hereinafter called the A.R.A.) the following privileges which are identical with those accorded the A.R.A. by the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic under the Riga Agreement.

The Ukrainian Authorities agree:

*First:* That the A.R.A. may bring into the Ukraine such personnel as the A.R.A. finds necessary in the carrying out of its work and the Ukrainian Authorities guarantee them full liberty and protection while in the Ukraine. Non-Americans and Americans who have been detained in Soviet Ukraine since 1917 will be admitted on approval by the Ukrainian Authorities.

*Second:* That they will, on demand of the A.R.A., immediately extend all facilities for the entry into and exit from the Ukraine of the personnel mentioned in (1) and while such personnel are in the Ukraine the Ukrainian Authorities shall accord them full liberty to come and go and move about the Ukraine on official business and shall provide them with all necessary papers, such as safe-conducts, laissez passer, et cetera, to facilitate their travel.

*Third:* That in securing Ukrainian and other local personnel, the A.R.A. shall have complete freedom as to selection and the Ukrainian Authorities will, on request, assist the A.R.A. in securing same.

*Fourth:* That on delivery by the A.R.A. of its relief supplies at the ports of Petrograd, Murmansk, Archangel, Novorossisk, Odessa or other Russian and Ukrainian ports as mutually agreed upon, or the nearest practicable available ports in adjacent countries, decision to lie with the A.R.A. or to any inland Russian or Ukrainian frontier

point, the Ukrainian Authorities, in understanding with the Soviet Russian Authorities, will bear all further costs such as discharge, handling, loading and transportation to interior base points in the areas where the A.R.A. may operate. Should demurrage or storage occur at above ports mutually agreed upon as satisfactory, such demurrage or storage is for the account of the Ukrainian Authorities. For purposes of this agreement the ports of Riga, Reval, Libau, Hango, Helsingfors, Windau and Abo are also considered satisfactory ports. Notice of at least five days will be given to Ukrainian representatives at respective ports in case the Ukrainian Authorities are expected to take c.i.f. delivery.

*Fifth:* That they will at their own expense supply the necessary storage at interior base points mentioned in paragraph (4) and handling and transportation from same to all such other interior points as the A.R.A. may designate.

*Sixth:* That in all above storage and movement of relief supplies they will give the A.R.A. the same priority over all other traffic as the Ukrainian Authorities give their own relief supplies, and on demand of the A.R.A. will furnish adequate guards and convoys.

*Seventh:* That they will give free import and re-export and guarantee freedom from requisition to all A.R.A. supplies of whatever nature. The A.R.A. will repay the Ukrainian Authorities for expenses incurred by them on re-exported supplies.

*Eighth:* That the relief supplies are intended only for those persons designated by the A.R.A. in accordance with paragraph (23), and remain property of the A.R.A. until actually consumed by those persons, and are to be distributed in the name of the A.R.A.

*Ninth:* That no individual receiving A.R.A. rations shall be deprived of such local supplies as are given to the rest of the population.

*Tenth:* That they will guarantee and take every step to insure that relief supplies belonging to the A.R.A. will not go to the general adult population nor to the Army, Navy, or Government employees but only to such persons as designated in paragraphs (8) and (24).

*Eleventh:* The Ukrainian Authorities undertake to reimburse the A.R.A. in dollars at c.i.f. cost or replace in kind any misused relief supplies.

*Twelfth:* That the A.R.A. shall be allowed to set up the necessary organizations for carrying out its relief work free from governmental or other interference. The Central and local Ukrainian Authorities have the right of representation thereon.

*Thirteenth:* That the Ukrainian Authorities will provide:

- A. The necessary premises for kitchens, dispensaries and, in as far as possible, hospitals.
- B. The necessary fuel, and when available cooking, distributing and feeding equipment for the same.
- C. Through the A.R.A. the total cost of relief administration, food preparation, distribution, etc. The A.R.A. will present a monthly budget to the Ukrainian Authorities and the Ukrainian Authorities will turn over to the A.R.A. monthly funds to cover: the A.R.A. will account to the Ukrainian Authorities for expenditures from those funds.



- D. On demand of the A.R.A. such local medical personnel and assistance, satisfactory to the A.R.A. as are needed to efficiently administer its relief.
- E. Without cost, railway, motor, water or other transportation for movement of relief supplies and of such personnel as may be necessary to efficiently control relief operations. The Ukrainian Authorities will for the duration of the A.R.A. operations assign to the A.R.A. for the sole use of its personnel and transport free of cost, such railway carriages as the A.R.A. may reasonably request.

*Fourteenth:* In localities where the A.R.A. may be operating and where epidemics are raging, the A.R.A. shall be empowered by the Ukrainian Authorities to take such steps as may be necessary towards the improvement of sanitary conditions, protection of water supply, etc.

*Fifteenth:* That they will supply free of charge the necessary offices, garages, storerooms, etc., for the transaction of the A.R.A. business and when available heat, light and water for same. Further that they will place at the disposal of the A.R.A. adequate residential quarters for the A.R.A. personnel in all localities where the A.R.A. may be operating. All such above premises to be free from seizure and requisition. Examination of above premises will not be made except with knowledge and in presence of the chief of the A.R.A. operations in Russia or his representative and except in case of flagrant delit when examiner will be held responsible in case examination unwarranted.

*Sixteenth:* That they will give the A.R.A. complete freedom and priority without cost in the use of existing radio, telegraph, telephone, cable, post and couriers in the Ukraine and will provide the A.R.A. when available and subject to the consent of competent authorities, with private telegraph and telephone wires and maintenance free of cost.

*Seventeenth:* To accord the A.R.A. and its American representatives and its couriers the customary diplomatic privileges as to passing the frontiers.

*Eighteenth:* To supply the A.R.A. free of cost with the necessary gasoline and oil to operate its motor transportation and to transport such motor transportation by rail or otherwise as may be necessary.

*Nineteenth:* To furnish at the request of the competent A.R.A. authorities all A.R.A. personnel, together with their impediments and supplies, free transportation in the Ukraine.

*Twentieth:* To permit the A.R.A. to import and re-export free of duty and requisition such commissary, transport and office supplies as are necessary for its personnel and administration.

*Twenty-First:* That they will acquaint the Ukrainian people with the aims and methods of the relief work of the A.R.A. in order to facilitate the rapid development of its efficiency and will assist and facilitate in supplying the American people with reliable and non-political information of the existing conditions and the progress of the relief work as an aid in developing financial support in America.

*Twenty-Second:* That they will bear all expenses of the relief operations other than:

- A. Cost of relief supplies at port (see paragraph 4).
- B. Direct expenses of American control and supervision of relief work in the Ukraine. In general they will give the A.R.A. all assistance in their power toward the carrying out of its humanitarian relief operations.

*Twenty-Third:* The agreement of October nineteenth, 1921, between the American Relief Administration and the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic covering the operations of the American Relief Administration warehouses in Russia, is accepted by the Ukrainian Authorities, with all its privileges and assistance to the A.R.A. and its mutual guarantees, as covering the operation of the American Relief Administration warehouses in the Ukrainian Soviet Republic. The Ukrainian Authorities agree that the net profits accruing from the operation may be used, at the discretion of the A.R.A., for the feeding of children in the famine areas of Russia.

The A.R.A. agrees:

*Twenty-Fourth:* That its relief distribution will be without regard to race, religion or social or political status.

*Twenty-Fifth:* That its personnel in the Ukraine will confine themselves strictly to the ministration of relief and will engage in no political or commercial activities whatever.

*Twenty-Sixth:* That it will import no alcohol in its relief supplies and will permit customs inspection of its imported relief supplies at points to be mutually agreed upon.

*Twenty-Seventh:* The Ukrainian Authorities and the A.R.A. equally reserve the right of cancelling this agreement in case of non-fulfilment of any of the above clauses, or upon ninety days' notice.

On behalf of the American Relief Administration,

WM. N. HASKELL, Director in Russia.

On behalf of Ukrainian Soviet Republic,

CH. RAKOVSKY, President of People's Commissaries Council and  
People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs.

Made in Moscow, January Tenth, Nineteen hundred and twenty-two.

## DOCUMENT XIII

### AGREEMENT REGARDING OPERATIONS IN THE UKRAINE AND WHITE RUSSIA BETWEEN THE JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE AND THE AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

August 14, 1922.

In view of the fact that the American Relief Administration expects to continue its childfeeding and medical sanitary operations in Russia (including the Ukraine and White Russia), at least over the coming winter, and since the Joint Distribution Committee desires the American Relief Administration to continue in the Ukraine and White Russia and desires to participate in these operations, and it being essential that additional foodstuffs be provided at once to inaugurate a feeding program estimated by competent authorities at about 300,000 children monthly in the Ukraine and White Russia,

the following agreement is made between the American Relief Administration and the Joint Distribution Committee for operations after September 1st:

1—While the American Relief Administration remains in Russia (for a period which cannot be definitely determined) it will supervise and conduct, with the assistance of the Joint Distribution Committee as detailed herein, a childfeeding program as above in the Ukraine and White Russia, in accordance with the American Relief Administration principles, on the basis of relative need. The facts at hand indicate that the feeding program for the coming year will be chiefly urban.

2—The American Relief Administration will supervise and conduct in the Ukraine and White Russia on the same basis of relative need, an extensive medical program already inaugurated, chiefly in large cities, looking towards hospitalization, inoculation, sanitation, etc. For this work, the American Relief Administration estimates that it has already allocated supplies to the value of \$500,000 in the Ukraine and White Russia and expects to allocate additional supplies to the value of at least \$1,000,000.

3—The Joint Distribution Committee will appropriate and allocate to the American Relief Administration the sum of \$1,250,000 for childfeeding and medical work as aforesaid. These funds to be used exclusively in the Ukraine and White Russia. All further sums necessary for this program will be furnished by the American Relief Administration. This appropriation is based on a program lasting until August, 1923, should the American Relief Administration remain in Russia for that period.

4—The Joint Distribution Committee will continue to be entitled to have representation on the staff of the Director of the American Relief Administration in Russia and the allocation and methods of feeding shall be in accordance with the American Relief Administration principles, and shall be such as to reach a fair share of the Jewish children; feeding for such children may be through existing agencies, institutions, etc. Representation shall be had by the Joint Distribution Committee also upon the medical staff.

5—American Relief Administration will see to it that the Joint Distribution Committee shall receive full credit throughout the Ukraine and White Russia by appropriate signboards at feeding stations, hospitals, clinics, etc., so that the population shall know that the work both of childfeeding and medical relief is ASSISTED BY THE AMERICAN JEWISH JOINT DISTRIBUTION COMMITTEE. This wish of the Joint Distribution Committee is prompted by its hope of fostering better relations between elements of the Russian people.

6—Joint Distribution Committee expects on its own account and responsibility to engage in reconstruction work, and in so far as the American Relief Administration is concerned, there is no objection; this work will be completely independent Joint Distribution Committee operation for which the American Relief Administration will in no way be responsible.

(Signed) WALTER LYMAN BROWN,

(Signed) LEWIS L. STRAUSS.



## DOCUMENT XIV

EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN ALLEN T. BURNS  
AND HERBERT HOOVER ON THE RUSSIAN RELIEF  
SITUATION

Mr. Allen T. Burns,  
National Information Bureau,  
1 Madison Ave.,  
New York City.

January 29, 1923.

Dear Mr. Burns:

I have again read the memorandum which you handed us Tuesday evening as the result of a meeting with some of your friends in New York on January 19th, in which you join with them in the wish that the American Relief Administration would organize a great public appeal for the further relief of Russian adults (the children and general medical relief having been provided for). I think it is desirable that I should review the sequent steps and decisions which have been taken by the Directors of the American Relief Administration affecting relief during the present winter.

As you are aware, through the Congressional appropriation of \$24,000,000, together with the efforts of the American Relief Administration and its associated bodies, we provided approximately \$60,000,000 worth of supplies in relief of the famine last winter and actually fed at one time 11,000,000 people and furnished medical relief to a much larger number. With the arrival of the present harvest these relief resources were practically exhausted and thus marked the end of that campaign. It then became necessary to take new decisions in the whole question of extended relief.

The problem revolved primarily upon the question of the results of the harvest and fell into two separate phases; that is, the needs of adults and the needs of children. The volume of the harvest is one of great difficulty in determination. There were some areas of short crop this harvest, but much smaller than the last famine year. The total number involved this time was apparently 5,000,000 to 8,000,000 people, of whom at least 2,000,000 were children. The harvest outside of these areas was undoubtedly better than that of the famine harvest of August a year ago, but whether the surplus of breadstuffs from the rest of Russia was sufficient to take care of these special famine areas is a matter we have not been able to determine satisfactorily. The machinery for accurate estimation of the harvest has long since been destroyed and Russia is as big as the United States. The Soviet authorities had themselves very conflicting estimates on the question; at one time they announced an ample supply for the entire Russian people. In October, however, certain divisions of the Soviet Government approached us with the statement that their surpluses were insufficient to take care of the short crop areas, and asked us to join in the provision of general famine relief. At the same time announcement was made by other Soviet authorities of their intention to export grain.

It would naturally be assumed that if grain would be exported there must be a surplus over the actual needs of the adult population. What the actual harvest has since proved to be is possibly indicated by the recent announcement of the Soviet authorities that the food tax has realized 330,000,000 poods (about 200,000,000 bushels) of grain, as against 84,000,000 poods (about 56,000,000 bushels) realized by the tax from the famine harvest of a year ago, and also it is stated that there is 100,000,000 poods surplus (about 67,000,000 bushels) in the hands of the peasants for commercial distribution. We cannot, of course, guarantee these figures, but if they are true these amounts would support the whole town population of Russia and two or three times the number of estimated adult famine sufferers.

In accordance with the announced policy of the Soviet authorities mentioned above, actual export of food has taken place and further negotiations for the sale of food for export are in process. If the surplus of breadstuffs is sufficient to take care of the entire population, leaving a margin for legitimate export, there would be no need for charitable anxiety for the adult population. If, on the other hand, the surplus was insufficient to take care of the adult population of the short crop areas, then whatever food is exported means just that much loss of life, or, alternatively, would need to be replaced by charitable action.

The problem of children is one apart from adults because of the waif and orphan children from the last famine, who are as yet unsettled, and because the effect of famine is the destruction of animals and thus a continuing famine during part of the year in the vital foods necessary for children, such as milk, and its fats, particularly in the areas of repeated short crop. We estimated that these might amount to 2,500,000 to 3,000,000 children during the peak of scarcity.

Despite the confused situation as to internal supplies for adults, but with the great desire to be prepared to meet any eventuality, the Directors of the American Relief Administration instructed Colonel Haskell to undertake negotiations with the Soviet authorities in response to their request, on the lines of their exerting their every resource, including the use of the church treasures, which had been confiscated for relief purposes but not yet realized for that purpose, together with an undertaking on their part to prohibit exports. Under such an arrangement the American Relief Administration proposed to make a general appeal for famine relief for Russia, and particularly for the children's side of the problem, and would endeavor to constructively work out the situation.

These negotiations extended over a considerable period and can best be summated in the final cable sent to Colonel Haskell on November 18th:

"One: The original proposition was the statement from the Soviet Government confirmed by the American Relief Administration that some eight millions of Russian people, including 3,000,000 children, were in immediate jeopardy of starvation, together with a definite request from the Soviet for our charitable help.

"Two: It is obvious that the volume of intended exports of grain now disclosed by their statement would maintain the whole

adult population in the famine areas, leaving the problem solely one of children.

"Three: The American Relief Administration cannot enter into argument as to the stated reason of the legal inability of the Soviet Government to sell or borrow upon its liquid assets in order to revolve its foodstuffs internally or to import, further than to mention that the Soviet Government has continuously sold confiscated property in England and continental countries for the last two years.

"Four: Of major importance, however, is the fact that the American Relief Administration being a charitable organization devoted to saving human life from starvation, must protest against the inhumanity of a government policy of exporting food from starving people in order that through such export it may secure machinery and raw materials for the economic improvement of the survivors. Any such action imposes the direct responsibility for the death of millions of people upon the Government authorities.

"Five: We do not believe that the American people will respond to an appeal for charity to prevent starvation when available food is being hauled by rail across the very areas where millions of people will die, and is exported through the very ports into which food must be imported for their salvation."

Colonel Haskell met with final and complete refusal on both propositions, although we were willing to rest only upon the suppression of exports.

Upon this determination the Directors, including Colonel Haskell, decided that an appeal for general famine relief would be futile in results, but at the same time believing that the problem of children is always separate from all other questions, especially in respect to the special food required, such as milk, fats, etc., the American Relief Administration at once proceeded, together with their associated organizations, to provide the necessary funds with which to carry a program for children rising to a maximum of approximately 3,000,000 up to the harvest of next August, and the Directors have succeeded in the provision of these funds without a general appeal and have purchased the necessary commodities in America for such a program. If the need of children proves greater than this number, the Directors of the American Relief Administration are prepared to make every effort to meet it. Incidentally, the considerable failure of the appeal for Greek refugees, where there were none of the complexities here involved, did not give much encouragement of possible success for a general appeal.

Our medical and sanitary program, dealing largely with the adult life and involving some \$8,000,000 in supplies alone, has continued without interruption and does not form a part of this discussion.

I understand that the position of you and your friends is that despite all of the above, a general appeal should be made for adult relief, and that the export and other questions are not of major importance in the face of the possible need and could be minimized or could be explained so that such a general appeal would succeed. Some of your



friends have changed their views upon the presentation of these facts.

Bearing in mind the situation set out above, it has seemed to us that the following reasons must dominate any alteration to our decision:

The organization of an appeal means the creation of a multitude of state, county and city committees, with the whole-hearted support of the press for a national drive, and no such appeal can succeed if it is subject to divided opinion. It would most assuredly lead to acrimony and bitterness in discussion. In any event an attempt to minimize pertinent factors to our people in an appeal for their sacrifice would surely subject us to rightful criticism. The most important single factor in the work of the American Relief Administration in prevention of starvation from famine in recent years has been the confidence and support it has received from the American people based upon its uniform policy in every country of insistence on full local effort and a complete disclosure to the American public of every factor.

Actual export of grain is going on from Russia and has been fully ventilated in press dispatches from there and by repeated public announcements from Soviet authorities. It is not in our power to minimize its importance even if we wished to do so. Any appeal for general charity would have an instant interpretation from our very practical minded people as being an attempt to provide for the replacement of exported grain at the expense of 5,000 miles haulage and from American sacrifice, and this would bring an immediate demand to know why an effort was not made to prevent so palpable a reduction of supplies as exports. Then the negotiations as disclosed above must come out and facts could not be minimized.

Therefore, the view of the Directors of the American Relief Administration last November seems to us to still hold; that a general appeal is bound to be futile of results, and moreover to carry serious dangers that it would create a bitterness of public discussion which in reflection back to Russia would be likely to endanger the work on behalf of children that the Administration has created and is carrying on.

Objections will be raised by many to an appeal to sacrifices of our people on behalf of foreign distress where the foreign government does not first apply its own resources to that end, and likewise many will hold that true charity recognizes only the suffering and not the cause. The American Relief Administration looks only to distress, but it must weigh the practical issue of deciding whether an appeal would succeed for such an object, and whether the friction which must go with this appeal as stated above will not endanger the lives of 3,000,000 children already provided for. It decided the first in the negative, the latter in the affirmative, and it decided further that it would make no public statement and arouse no public discussion at all unless explanation became necessary in defense of the Administration's action.

To those who object to relief to Russia in any form, I will say that I have no hesitation in spending the resources of the American Relief Administration and of its fully informed supporters on the

children of Russia, even in the present situation, because Americans will not quarrel with children.

I am aware of the fine sympathy of many of our people for the terrible plight of the Russian people, and in our endeavor to maintain life to all the Russian children, who may be in danger from famine we believe the American Relief Administration is doing its part. The field in Russia for charity is indeed large and with your friends feeling as they do, they could with entire propriety make their own appeal and state their own reasons. We will gladly administer any gifts from those who give in full understanding of the situation.

You will be interested to see the independent decision, which I send herewith, arrived at by the Directors of the British Funds who had been confronted with the same problem.

Yours faithfully,  
(Signed) HERBERT HOOVER.

*Sir Benjamin Robertson on Russian Famine*

*Time for British Relief to Cease*

London *Times*, Jan. 1, 1923. Sir Benjamin Robertson, member of the India Council, who last year presided over the British effort for the relief of the famine in Russia, gave his opinion yesterday to the London *Times* on the present position in Russia.

Sir Benjamin, in July last, severed his connection with the All British Appeal for the relief of the famine, and at the time he said that, "with the advent of a normal season, the time had arrived for the Soviet Government to show its competence and itself assist the people under its rule. The Bolshevists at the Hague had spoken about their splendid harvest and about the excellence of their administrative arrangements. It was for them to demonstrate their efficiency by sweeping away the remains of last year's catastrophe." Sir Benjamin had then advised that the All British Appeal should be closed, but made the reservation that the societies in the famine areas would have to continue to support the ownerless children they were then feeding until arrangements could be made for their disposal.

Since then, Sir Benjamin has closely followed the situation. He has noticed the statements in the *Times* of September 20 and November 28 that the Commissioner for Agriculture had advised the Soviet Government of the shortness of food stocks in Russia and the precariousness of the agricultural situation for the coming year. Despite these warnings, it has now been decided by the All Russia Congress of Soviets that exports of grain should be permitted, and it is reported that exports have already taken place. Sir Benjamin also understands that growing impatience has been manifested by the Soviet Government and its officials towards the activities of relief workers; they have tried to impose restrictions on the latter which must tend to hamper their work. The information which Sir Benjamin has received goes to show that the Soviet Government is beginning to think that the presence of relief workers in Russia is an advertisement of the inefficiency of its rule, and that it would not, therefore, be sorry to see the relief workers go.

Notwithstanding the unfavorable prospects for the coming year, Sir

Benjamin adheres to the opinion he expressed last July that the Soviet Government should itself be left to deal with the situation. Its attitude toward the relief societies and its recent decision with regard to the export of grain confirm his view that further appeals for famine relief should cease. It does not seem right for other countries to contribute toward the pauperization of the Russian people nor to continue to throw money into this bottomless pit.

February 3, 1923.

Hon. Herbert Hoover,  
American Relief Administration,  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Secretary:—

Thank you for your full and impressive letter of January 29th regarding your attitude toward further appeals for relief funds for Russia. No one can help agreeing with much of your conclusion on the basis of the unquestionable facts you present. May I say that personally I understand how, with all your other obligations and connections, it is practically impossible for you to make an effective appeal in view of the facts as they exist.

Frankly, however, you did not convince us of the impossibility or inadvisability of making a statement on the present conditions in Russia and the reasons you cannot make an appeal. In your position you have to give weight to various considerations in a way which we do not and we are in no position to criticize your decision. We do, however, wish to put on record that we are unconvinced that a statement on the situation would be unwise in view of the general misapprehension on the part of the public as to present conditions in Russia and your agreement that there is such misapprehension.

We feel that you have misstated our position with reference to an appeal being made. We have not been urging an appeal for this is not the business of the National Information Bureau. Our primary purpose is to prevent confusion, duplication and controversy in national relief appeals and to promote their systematic effectiveness. We have felt that with regard to Russian appeals, nothing could promote these ends so much as to have the American Relief Administration continue its remarkable work. Also, we wished to avoid having our report appear to be in contradiction to the publicity of the American Relief Administration, thus making possible a controversy and perhaps criticism upon America's outstanding foreign relief work.

It has been in the interest of these purposes of the National Information Bureau that we have conferred with you on the advisability of a Russian appeal. In your letter of January 11, 1923, you suggested that we consult with possible contributors as to the effectiveness of an appeal in the face of the existing facts. With the result of this canvass you have been fully acquainted.

We are still concerned with the possible confusion and multiplicity of appeals for Russia which may follow our report when it is found that the American Relief Administration does not intend to care for the situation beyond its present plans. We are equally fearful of the possible criticism of the achievements of the American Relief Administration because of the differences which may appear between our re-



port and the news of increasing famine on the one hand, and the general publicity of the Relief Administration on the other. Not only to Russian relief, but to all American philanthropy a great injury will be done should there arise on the basis of facts a sharp criticism or controversy about America's greatest achievement in the relief field. We fear that the mere existence of apparent disagreement and dispute will lessen public confidence and interest in meeting conditions of deplorable human need. It is in pursuance of this purpose that we have done our utmost to prevent our report from being a basis for controversy and confusion in the field of Russian relief. No less has it been our concern to avoid, by every means in our power, doing anything which might furnish material for criticism of you or of the marvelous achievements of the A.R.A. and we cannot but feel aggrieved that you have so completely misunderstood our purpose.

Yours very truly,  
(Signed) ALLEN T. BURNS,  
Director.

February 6, 1923.

Mr. Allen T. Burns,  
National Information Bureau,  
1 Madison Avenue,  
New York City, N. Y.

My dear Burns:

I am sorry you have any misapprehension with regard to my letter of January 29th. I was under the impression that you were anxious for us to make an appeal and I certainly took the series of resolutions which you handed me as the result of a luncheon with some of your friends in New York as being a direct expression of such desire.

As to our making public statements, I wish to repeat that the only reason the American Relief Administration is reluctant to enter public discussion of the policies of the Soviet authorities unless it is forced to do so, is the inevitable bitterness that will result and its jeopardy to the lives of the three million children for whom we have been able to secure financial support.

Yours faithfully,  
(Signed) HERBERT HOOVER.

## DOCUMENT XV

### THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN RUSSIA AND THE FUTURE OF RELIEF WORK

(Letter from Herbert Hoover to C. V. Hibbard of the Y.M.C.A.)

March 23, 1923.

Mr. C. V. Hibbard,  
Associate General Secretary,  
International Committee Y.M.C.A.,  
347 Madison Avenue,  
New York City.

My dear Mr. Hibbard:

I am in receipt of your request, as well as requests from several other relief organizations, for a survey of the present situation in

Russia in its relation as to various American efforts in relief and reconstruction. To begin with, there must be some understanding of the situation in Russia itself, and the following is drawn from the composite opinion of many careful observers who have studied the problems on the ground:

It is impossible to picture adequately the complete impoverishment of a great nation. The war, the revolution, the blockade, the great climatic famine of last year, the trial and failure of Communism—all have combined to project a misery and impoverishment the most awful of modern history.

The terrible famines and epidemics have been stemmed through the great relief campaign and the improved harvest of last August. There are some signs of renewed national life from the changes in economic policies, yet standards of living are still the lowest in the civilized world, disease is rife, and mortality is high.

The "economic retreat" from Communism undertaken two years ago has resulted in impulse to recovery in certain directions. It has restored a large measure of individualism and initiative in agriculture, small trades, and small industries. The agricultural population (over 90 per cent of the whole) in some measure shows a hopeful stir of improvement because of the division of the old landlord lands, the establishment of limited right of inheritance, the fixation of taxation with a graduated percentage in kind, and the freedom to market any surplus, have all in some measure restored primary self interest in production. Progress in recovery has been retarded by the great famine from the 1921 crop failure in the Volga Valley and the Southern Ukraine, from the loss of animals, from the decreased output of agricultural implement factories over many years, and from the plagues of insect pests. Fundamental recovery is taking place, but it will be slow and painful without help from the outside world. The most recent official announcement (for the reliability of which I take no responsibility) of the increase in the yield of the grain tax from about 70,000,000 bushels out of the 1921 crop to about 220,000,000 bushels out of the 1922 crop, together with the announcements that the Government is in position to care for the local famine areas and is able to export anywhere from 10,000,000 to 50,000,000 bushels of surplus, are all at least indications of progress in grain production. But the peasants are still very short of work animals and food animals, and the children in some localities are consequently short of the necessary milk and fats.

In large industry the shift from Communism was accompanied by the introduction of "State Socialism," by creation of several score of governmental "trusts" covering the major industries, such as cotton and textile trusts, oil trusts, et cetera and by the control of all exports and imports through government monopoly. The trusts pay wages to their workmen and sell their commodities and services to each other and to the public in replacement of the former system, where all services and commodities were in effect put into a common pool and rationed out to each member of the community. This change has not been sufficient to improve the conditions of large industry, because the impulses which are the real basis for the attraction of capital and brains for reconstruction have not been restored. This, together with de-

generated skill and loss of administrative personnel, and consequent increase in costs of production and lower buying power of the population generally, has brought about a large amount of unemployment in the industries. This unemployment introduced a cross current of underfeeding from poverty as distinguished from famine, and the abolition of the communistic ration leaves this group in difficulties.

The manufacturing industries showed last year a few per cent recuperation from the period of Communism, the production of different industries ranging from 3 to 35 per cent compared to pre-war. This production was accomplished, however, at financial loss to each trust, and a diminishing of the stocks inherited from the old régime. The currency was inflated to pay these losses until roubles are fifty million to the dollar, and further relapse in industrial production is in progress or imminent. Coal production is about one-third of pre-war; in consequence, the cities are always underheated and production and transportation constantly hampered. The production of textiles is about 25 per cent of pre-war and the population, consequently, is insufficiently clad.

The foreign trade is a Government monopoly, and exports for 1922 were about \$40,000,000 or about 5 per cent of pre-war. It is announced by the Soviet authorities that the export of grain now in progress is intended to purchase agricultural tools and cotton, but the quantity thus obtainable must be small compared to the needs. The few other exports, such as timber, furs, flax, scrap iron, et cetera, will produce some further intake of raw material or machinery but will not be sufficient to enable Russia's full recovery without the help of inflowing capital. The finances of the Government are so low as to have caused the closing of a large part of the schools.

What Russia needs is economic reconstruction; the recreation of productivity. Her peasants need agricultural machinery and animals. Her workmen need tools, her industries need raw materials, her factories need new machinery, her transportation needs repairs and equipment. If her large industry is to be restored, she needs skilled workmen and trained executives and the impulse of self interest that is absent from nationalized industry.

Furthermore, for purposes of restoration, gigantic sums of capital and the professional personnel to direct reconstruction must come from abroad. No doubt a few speculators and concession hunters intent on several hundred per cent per annum will be willing to take the risks, but the great flow of capital investment at reasonable rates can not arise until the whole system is advanced to the fundamental position upon which security and confidence must rest.

It is a hopeless illusion that there will be a flow of foreign savings, business, or skill into Russia, by the simple act of official recognition by our Government. Indeed there has been no appreciable investment in Russia from the several countries which have extended recognition, although some of them are exporting capital in other directions. This is not an argument for or against recognition, but simply a statement that the question of restored productivity to large industry rests on other fundamentals, such as the security and the freedom of initiative, and these can only be created through the institutions of Russia her-



self. The Russian people must work out all these problems in their own way. They might succeed upon the present line by the ultimate abandonment of large manufacture, for it is conceivable that they can do without large industry and establish a low-grade agricultural state dependent upon exchange of food to other countries for manufactured necessities. All that charitable relief can hope to do is lift special groups from utter destitution up to the level of the general poverty and thus to prolong life for the future.

In any event, it will be seen that there are four entirely different "relief" problems in Russia—the first is the great famine, which was due to the failure of the harvest of 1921. This had to be relieved last year by food shipments from America, accomplished through the mobilization of some \$70,000,000 by the American Relief Administration and coöperating bodies:

Young Men's Christian Association and its Student Friendship Fund  
American Red Cross

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee

American Friends Service Committee

Mennonite Central Relief Committee

National Catholic Welfare Council

National Lutheran Council

Volga Relief Society

Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America

Southern Baptist Convention

With the funds so mobilized which include large appropriations from the United States Congress and the Soviet Government the lives of 11,000,000 people were saved. Other foreign organizations supported about 1,000,000.

While the crop of 1922 partly remedied the situation, it was because of continued shortages in the vital foods necessary for children that the American Relief Administration and coöperating associations continued to ship to Russia the necessary supplies for 3,000,000 children until next harvest. The American Quakers and some British associations are also at work in this field. If the next harvest is successful the continued shipment, even of special foods for children, should not be necessary.

The second problem is disease. The A.R.A. from Congressional appropriation of war stocks and through support of the Red Cross, has carried on a campaign against the spread of typhus, typhoid, malaria, and smallpox. The medical supplies were furnished and the Russian doctors organized to the extent that 12,000 hospitals were equipped and over 5,000,000 people inoculated or vaccinated. Thus the spread of these diseases has been much curtailed. The medical supplies in the hands of the relief organization will last until next summer, after which time they will need to be imported by the Government or other charitable sources.

The third problem is poverty. This has its most active expression in unemployment, for starvation can take place in the presence of ample and cheap food supply if people can not buy. As a matter of charity, this can only be relieved by the organization of individual relief. Its primary cure is reconstruction. The A.R.A., in coöpera-

tion with the Student Friendship Fund of the Y.M.C.A. and acting on behalf of various generous individuals, is doing something in this field, as it is now furnishing food and clothing to from 100,000 to 150,000 students, school teachers, and professional groups, who are vital to the recuperation of Russia.

The fourth problem is reconstruction. In the large industries and foreign trade this is hopeless until economic fundamentals are altered and large capital flows into Russia. In the agricultural population the problem is not so hopeless, for the needs are less in volume; the impulse to produce is largely restored, and it does offer a field toward which charity can well direct itself with hopes of constructive results. The work of the several American associations in this field is effecting good results and should go on. Being an emergency organization solely for famine, the A.R.A. can not undertake reconstruction.

The first phase of relief—the shipment of food—will, I hope, be over with next harvest, although this depends upon the harvest itself. The other forms of relief—medical, poverty, reconstruction—will deservedly pull upon the heart-strings of charity for many years to come and offer an ample field for those who can devote themselves to such work, for the terrible suffering of a great people groping for freedom from centuries of wrong must enlist the sympathy of every well thinking person. But one essential is critically necessary; in order that such American effort shall be in responsible hands and not exhausted in propaganda, it should be administered through some of the above religious bodies.

Yours faithfully,  
(Signed) HERBERT HOOVER.

## DOCUMENT XVI

### REPORT ON THE RUSSIAN RELIEF SITUATION

(A letter from Herbert Hoover to President Harding)

February 9, 1922.

His Excellency,  
The President,  
The White House.

Dear Mr. President:

I am very glad to respond to your inquiry as to the general status of the effort to relieve the Russian famine.

The American Relief Administration appointed by you to distribute the Congressional appropriation also distributes food, clothing and medical supplies from a number of other sources. The total resources of this organization since the beginning of its work in Russia are in round numbers as follows:

Congressional authorization of December 22 .....	\$20,000,000
Surplus medical supplies appropriated by Congress, Jan. 20..	4,000,000
Existing charitable balances of the Relief Administration ....	10,000,000
American Red Cross contribution of medical supplies .....	3,600,000
Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial .....	500,000
Joint Distribution Committee, initial contribution .....	700,000
Joint Distribution Committee, special donation .....	161,000
Volga Relief Society .....	145,000
Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America .....	50,000
International Committee Y.M.C.A. ....	50,000
Mennonite Central Committee .....	58,000
National Lutheran Council .....	300,000
Food transfers from individuals and groups in the United States to individuals in Russia .....	870,000
Food transfers to the American Friends Service Committee ...	265,000
Furnished by Soviet Government in gold: January .....	10,200,000
Furnished by Soviet Government in gold; February .....	2,000,000
<b>Total Resources .....</b>	<b>\$52,899,000</b>

### *Shipments*

The American Relief Administration extended its work from children in other parts of Europe to children in Russia in September, 1921. Until the passage of the Congressional appropriations on December 22nd and January 20th, and the receipt of the gold contribution from the Soviet Government on January 10th, it was dependent upon its reserve of charitable funds, and confined its work to children and transmission of food orders. It had gradually increased its service up to feeding 1,200,000 children on the first of January.

The larger resources made available at the first of this year permitted a program of distribution to adults and the provision of seed. Under your direction a Purchasing Commission for the Congressional fund was established on December 24th, through whom all purchases are made from the lowest bidders. The first ship from this fund was dispatched on January 1st and during that month 24 full American shiploads and several part cargoes were dispatched on all accounts. These shipments included 301,056,000 pounds of corn, 31,632,000 pounds of seed wheat, 25,700,000 pounds of milk, and sundry food and medical supplies for children, making a total of 160,000 tons. During February about 150,000 tons will be dispatched.

The resources of the Administration in hand will permit of the shipment of approximately 600,000 tons as from January 1, and the last shipment from America to be of use before harvest is about the end of May.

### *Distribution*

The American Relief Administration operates under agreement with the Soviet authorities of last August which has secured the release of American prisoners and so far proved by experience to give protection to the personnel, and independence in actual American distribution. Under this agreement the Soviet authorities furnish free all transportation, warehousing, buildings, and currency required for payment of Russian staff. American personnel is largely voluntary and the whole overhead is borne by its own special funds so that the



entire Congressional authorization is devoted to purchase and transportation, without other charges.

The method of distribution is to set up local committees on a strictly non-sectarian and non-political basis. Many thousand such committees have been created by the Administration and over 6,000 feeding stations under the name of the American Relief Administration have so far opened in the different towns and villages. These committees are usually under the chairmanship of the local doctor or school teacher and embrace in their membership every section of the local community, the whole under American direction and supervision. There has been faithful coöperation almost everywhere. The exceptions are easily attributable to the indifference and insolence of the type of officials who have never possessed human compassion or a spark of human kindness.

So far the rule of the Administration, maintained for years throughout Europe, has been adhered to of issuing no food except that eaten on the premises, and requiring evidence of actual under-nourishment before admission. Methods have been worked out for proper checks on issues to peasants in their homes in certain cases.

#### *The Situation in Russia*

The famine is proving of even larger dimensions than anticipated for the agricultural decadence outside the special drought region of the Volga Basin is so severe in some places as to amount to famine. The amounts of food estimated by the Soviet authorities as being available for towns in the non-drought area seem to have been much over-estimated.

The neck of the bottle in relief to the drought area is port facilities and transportation inside Russia. It is impossible to determine at this moment what quantities can be handled because the maximum pressure upon ports and railways will not occur until the large arrivals during this month. Already the Soviet transportation authorities have requested that the rate of dispatch (now 5,000 tons daily) should be slowed down, owing to their inability to handle such large quantities, and already there have been congestion and delays at some points. American transportation and port experts have been sent in the hope of increasing the volume of movement. Both Finnish and Polish Governments have offered free railway transport during the past few days and some increase can be had by using their ports.

The intensity of the famine is undoubtedly beyond any capacity of the accessible ports and railways, even if shipments were expanded considerably. In consequence there will be a great death roll under any present probable internal movement in Russia.

#### *Other Agencies Relieving Russia*

The American Relief Administration has made no appeal for general public charity to Russia. I have not believed that any adequate solution was possible through dependence upon such resources, in view of the overwhelming need in Russia and the great necessities of our home charities. On the other hand, no one would wish to discourage or to compete with any legitimate effort to alleviate suffering,

no matter how small. I have considered at all times that American charity to all countries should be distributed in the name of America, under active American personnel.

In the early fall, under your suggestion, arrangements were settled for coördination between the various American charities then interested in Russian relief, with a view to assuring the efficient handling and distribution of the supplies under American direction inside Russia. The growing intensity of the famine has enlisted the interest of additional organizations, and stimulated the creation of many new committees through the United States of various religious and political faiths. The organizations appealing for charity in America may be classified into several groups:

(a) Those organizations whose contributions are distributed in Russia by the American Relief Administration and who are represented upon the central relief staff at Moscow. That is, The American Red Cross, Joint Distribution Committee, Volga Relief Society, the Federal Council of Churches, the Southern Baptist Convention, National Lutheran Council, the Young Men's Christian Association, and the Mennonite Central Committee. The totals so far furnished by this group are shown above. The Council of Churches, the Southern Baptist Convention, the National Lutheran Council, and the Volga Relief Society are all engaged in strengthening their resources. The Joint Distribution Committee informs me they will make a further contribution of at least \$5,000,000 if their present drive for funds proves successful.

(b) The American Friends Service Committee (Quakers), and the Russian Famine Fund of New York which distributes through them. This committee distributes through its own American staff in Russia and coördinated its work with the Relief Administration. I am informed by the Friends that their resources total about \$1,000,000, of which \$265,000 is included above.

(c) The Near East Relief Committee, primarily concerned with Armenians and Syrians, but interested in Russia because of the inclusion of Caucasus Armenia in Russia. I am unable to estimate the amount of their expenditures upon the Armenians. It amounts to considerable sums.

(d) The group of committees purchasing their supplies through the American Federated Russian Famine Relief Committee of New York.

One group of these committees, comprising the "Friends of Soviet Russia," the Soviet Russian Medical Relief Society, The Technical Aid to Soviet Russia, and some 200 affiliated organizations whose activities are under the general direction of Dr. Jacob Hartman, are frankly communistic committees appealing to the communistic and socialist sections of the United States and sending their supplies to the Communist authorities in Russia.

Another group of committees is affiliated with the same purchasing agency and centers around the Russian Red Cross whose directing head in the United States is Dr. Dubrowsky, an agent of the Soviet Government. The Russian Red Cross inside Russia is a reconstruction of the pre-war Russian organization under the general control of the Soviet government and has been recognized by the International

Red Cross at Geneva. The committees affiliated with the Russian Red Cross comprise the American Committee for Russian Famine Relief of Chicago, The American Committee for Relief of Russian Children of New York, The Canadian Famine Relief Committee of Winnipeg.

The American Federated Russian Relief Committee has apparently secured about \$350,000 in cash and some \$200,000 in kind from both the above groups.

(e) The International Committee in Europe under Dr. Nansen through whom the British "Save the Children Fund" and other funds provide about \$2,500,000 the Norwegian, Swedish, Italian and other European national funds which also distribute through this agency. The French Government has voted \$550,000 and the totals available to Dr. Nansen's organization apparently amount to about \$4,000,000.

The Relief Administration hopes to sustain from 6,000,000 to 8,000,000 people and all the other associations (outside of Armenia) expect to care for some 400,000 to 500,000.

It would not be appropriate for me to close this report without an expression of appreciation, as its Chairman, of those men and women who carry the real burden of the American Relief Administration. I append a list of its membership. I especially commend to you its officials and I would add a further word upon the staff of over one hundred Americans in Russia who in the famine region are themselves enduring the greatest of hardships, and are showing an ability and devotion, and a courage worthy of our best traditions. The pathetic gratitude of the Russian people is impossible of description and the millions of lives saved will be indeed a sufficient recompense to the American people for the very great sacrifice they are making to render this service possible.

Yours faithfully,  
(Signed) HERBERT HOOVER.

## DOCUMENT XVII

### INTERIM REPORT ON THE RUSSIAN RELIEF SITUATION

(A letter from Herbert Hoover to President Harding)

16 July 1922

My dear Mr. President:

The Congressional authority for use of U. S. Grain Corporation funds in relief of the Russian famine expired on July 1, and it is, therefore, appropriate that I should submit a short Interim Report as to the general results so far attained—not only by these funds but also those administered by the American Relief Administration from other sources. Final report must be delayed until the receipt of accounts from Russia when distribution of supplies is complete. I send you herewith the accounts of the Purchasing Commission to July 1 showing all bids, acceptances, prices, shipments, etc.



The Commission has bought through the Grain Corporation and received from the War Department the following supplies, all but a small portion of which have now been dispatched to the Relief Administration:

	SHORT TONS
Corn .....	248,418
Corn grits .....	92,841
Wheat .....	41,120
Rye .....	21,074
Prepared milk .....	21,596
Medical supplies .....	3,400
Total .....	428,449

In addition to the above, the American Relief Administration has for its own account and that of other agencies acting through it dispatched the following materials, of which the rice, fats, sugar, cocoa, etc., are special additions to the children's ration:

	SHORT TONS
Wheat .....	111,686
Flour .....	101,955
Corn grits .....	29,559
Rye .....	4,200
Rice .....	15,763
Beans and peas and special seeds .....	9,295
Prepared milk .....	33,515
Sugar .....	15,464
Fats .....	9,277
Cocoa .....	3,395
Medical supplies .....	2,000
Miscellaneous, clothing, bags, soap, etc. ...	24,321
Total .....	360,430

The total of the above materials handled by the Relief Administration may be summarized as follows:

	SHORT TONS
Cereals for seed and food .....	666,613
Beans and peas and special seeds .....	9,295
Condensed and evaporated milk .....	55,111
Sugar .....	15,464
Fats .....	9,277
Cocoa .....	3,395
Medical supplies, clothing, and sundries ....	29,721
Total .....	788,878

#### *Financial Resources of the American Relief Administration*

The estimated resources mobilized from all quarters by the American Relief Administration for distribution under its agreed control will comprise the following approximate sums up to the end of the present campaign. No appeal for public charity has been made by the Relief Administration because it was considered that much larger financial measures were not only necessary to successfully meet the situation, but also that such appeal would greatly embarrass our home

charities which have been much strained during the past winter by unemployment.

General funds of American Relief Administration, food remittances, sundry donations .....	\$17,500,000
Congressional authorization for food and seed (total available funds of U. S. Grain Corporation) .....	19,300,000
Congressional authorization of war supplies, medical supplies. ....	4,000,000
American Red Cross medical supplies .....	3,600,000
Jewish Joint Distribution Committee .....	2,325,000
Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial .....	500,000
Gold supplied by Soviet Government .....	11,433,000
National Lutheran Council .....	300,000
Mennonite Central Committee .....	200,000
Volga Relief Society .....	200,000
Federal Council of Churches .....	90,000
International Committee Y.M.C.A. ....	50,000
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$59,498,000</b>

Under the stipulations of our agreement with the Russian authorities they have furnished all internal transportation, warehouses, distribution and equipment at their own cost. Furthermore, the Relief Administration deducts a margin for the service of remitting food orders from persons in the United States to specific persons in Russia. The amount realized from this margin will apparently exceed the overhead of the administration and becomes a substantial contribution to the children's relief. Therefore, no single cent of administration or distribution cost has been deducted from Congressional funds or donations through this organization.

In addition to the above amounts the Friends Service Committee, as the result of public appeals, have purchased \$415,000 of supplies from the A.R.A. and have made some direct shipments to their own distribution agencies. Furthermore, the various communist committees in the United States have secured public charity for supplies sent directly to the Soviet authorities—estimated by them at about \$500,000.

### *Distribution*

The A.R.A. administrative personnel at home and abroad comprises about 200 Americans with about 80,000 Russians under their direction. They were conducting 15,700 kitchens and distributing stations, feeding in round numbers about 3,250,000 children and 5,300,000 adults, a total of about 8,550,000 persons. This number will somewhat increase up to harvest. It is of course impossible to state the number of lives saved; it may be larger than the figures imply because, if it had been necessary to divide the native supplies amongst all those fed by the A.R.A., additional numbers would have been starved before harvest; theoretically, if 10 persons have 2 months' food, all are likely to die in 4 months, whereas, if 5 are fed from the outside, all should survive.

The medical supplies have enabled the great typhus, typhoid, small-pox, and famine fever epidemics to be kept under measurable control. Some millions of people have been inoculated for various diseases, and other sanitary measures put into force.

I am advised by our Russian staff that the Relief Administration is

now reaching all accessible persons whose lives are in jeopardy and that the loss of life directly due to starvation ceased some time since, although most everyone in Russia is hungry. There was considerable loss of life early in the winter which would have been much abated had the Russian railways been able to transport the large surplus of supplies which the American Relief Administration maintained in Russian ports.

The American Relief Administration supplies are sufficient to carry through until the harvest and have in hand a surplus which will be devoted to the further support of waif and destitute children after that date.

The other American organizations mentioned above as doing their own distribution are providing for approximately 100,000 persons. In addition to the American effort our advices indicate that about 400,000 persons are being supported by the combined effort of the other countries of Europe. The total contribution of all such countries amounts to about \$5,000,000 and the total supplies they have shipped to Russia have been about 45,000 tons.

### *Prospects of the Next Harvest in Russia*

It is too early to give an accurate opinion as to the results of this August harvest. The Soviet authorities have announced that it will be ample for next year. It is certain that the famine region will produce three or four times the quantity of food it did last harvest, mostly due to the large shipments of seed mentioned above. It also appears that climatic conditions are more favorable to the harvest from the remaining area of Russia than they were last year. The degeneration of agriculture does not, however, promise much hope of surplus. Whatever the supply may be, it seems likely there will be sporadic hardship in some localities due to the breakdown in distribution; extreme poverty will continue in the cities and the Jewish communities and furthermore one result of the shifting population and the ravages of famine has been a considerable body of waif and destitute children that will require time for reabsorption. The great famine is, however, under control and the situation promises much better after the harvest.

The possible extension of relief work after harvest requires more consideration before decision is reached; in any event the considerable resources obtained by the Soviet authorities from the confiscation of church treasures specifically for relief purposes places them in position to care for a large part of the destitute children. The American Relief Administration would, of course, endeavor to coöperate in a solution of the problem of children and others.

### *General*

I cannot fail to refer to the obligation we hold to the 200 of our citizens who have been engaged in the conduct of these operations, all of them at a personal sacrifice or danger and most of them under great hardship. Many of our staff have suffered from typhus, of which Mr. Blandy died; four or five have been retired from physical collapse. Rather than to attempt to recount their individual services, I transmit



to you the list of the entire personnel. Their task has been difficult beyond description in a country of degenerate transport; with government, economic, and social life just emerging from chaos.

I believe this effort has stemmed one of the greatest catastrophes that has followed the war. There is a deep feeling of gratitude in the minds of the Russian people and the results will, I am sure, be of lasting satisfaction to the American people. Without it certainly many millions of people would have died from starvation; millions more would have perished from the disorder and disease that would have followed.

I wish to express our appreciation of the energetic efforts of the Shipping Board in the movement of supplies, of the Navy for the detail of destroyers, and to their officers for assistance in handling port problems in Russia, to the Army for personnel and aid in supplies. The coöperation of other American associations mentioned above has contributed substantially, and a great measure of coöperation has been obtained from Russian officials.

I wish to add that this achievement would not have been possible without your unwavering support.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) HERBERT HOOVER,  
Chairman, American Relief Administration.

## DOCUMENT XVIII

### LIQUIDATION AGREEMENT

This agreement between the RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATIVE SOVIET REPUBLIC, party of the first part, hereinafter called the SOVIET GOVERNMENT, and the AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION, party of the second part, hereinafter called the A.R.A.

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS: The A.R.A. is about to complete the operations in Russia which have been carried on under the agreement with the SOVIET GOVERNMENT signed at Riga under date of August 20, 1921, and subsequent agreements of October 19, 1921, and October 26, 1922, and the parties are desirous of adjusting and settling all matters under or arising out of these operations.

IT IS THEREFORE AGREED BETWEEN THE PARTIES:

- (1) The A.R.A. hereby releases and discharges the Soviet Government from any and all claims of every kind and nature which it has against the SOVIET GOVERNMENT.
- (2) The SOVIET GOVERNMENT specifically releases to the A.R.A. the unexpended balance of the funds deposited with the London Office of the A.R.A. as security for the replacement of 4,500 tons of corn delivered to the Railways of the SOVIET GOVERNMENT.
- (3) The SOVIET GOVERNMENT hereby releases and discharges the A.R.A. from all claims, accounts and demands of

## THE FAMINE IN SOVIET RUSSIA

every nature and description which it, or any department, agency, or sub-division of the SOVIET GOVERNMENT or its allied, federated and associated Governments has or may have.

- (4) The SOVIET GOVERNMENT confirms that all funds and supplies of whatever nature turned over by it or its agents to the A.R.A. and disbursed or distributed by the A.R.A. for the SOVIET GOVERNMENT have been properly expended in accordance with existing agreements and fully and satisfactorily accounted for by the A.R.A.
- (5) On the departure of the A.R.A. from Russia the SOVIET GOVERNMENT will assume, and agrees to adjust, settle and pay all claims, demands and accounts of every kind and description which any Government or private firm, organization, corporation or person in Russia, or in any of its allied, federated or associated Republics has or may have against the A.R.A. for any matter arising out of or in connection with any of the operations of the A.R.A. and hereby agrees to protect and defend the A.R.A. against any such claims, accounts and demands and to hold the A.R.A. harmless in the premises.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties have hereinto set their signatures and seals this fifteenth day of June, in the year nineteen hundred and twenty-three.

(Signed) L. KAMENEV

For THE RUSSIAN SOCIALIST FEDERATED SOVIET  
REPUBLIC

(Signed) WM. N. HASKELL

For THE AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION.

## APPENDIX B

### STATISTICAL TABLES

TABLE I

#### TOTAL EXPENDITURES

#### RELIEF FURNISHED TO RUSSIA THROUGH THE AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

Congressional Appropriation of \$20,000,000 from Funds of the United States Grain Corporation .....	\$18,662,180.00
American Relief Administration:	
Charitable Distribution, Food and Miscellaneous .....	9,026,933.33
Food Remittances .....	9,305,300.00
Sales in Russia to Affiliated Relief and Other Organizations..	4,374,893.28
Clothing .....	737,317.12
From Gold Funds of the Russian republics <sup>1</sup> .....	11,357,325.13
Contribution of Food by Russian republics .....	30,026.64
Medical Supplies, Appropriated by the American Red Cross, Shipped, Transported and Distributed by the American Relief Administration .....	3,804,863.15
Congressional Appropriation of Surplus United States Army Medical Stocks .....	4,000,000.00
Donated by the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial for the Shipment, etc., of Army Supplies .....	267,392.88
<b>TOTAL, Administered by American Relief Administration</b>	<b>\$61,566,231.53<sup>2</sup></b>

<sup>1</sup> At the completion of the A.R.A. work in Russia a careful estimate was made of the contributions to relief of cash, services and facilities made by the Soviet Government in its coöperation with the A.R.A. within Russia. These contributions were valued at \$13,960,850 and are exclusive of the gold appropriations and Soviet appropriations for government or other foreign relief. This sum includes such items as stevedoring and other services at ports; rail and water freights; handling; motor and wagon hauling; light; water; fuel; baking; telephone and telegraph; travel; housing; etc.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to this amount some \$4,750,000 was separately administered by affiliated organizations.



TABLE II

RELIEF FURNISHED TO RUSSIA THROUGH THE AMERICAN RELIEF  
ADMINISTRATION

(Net Metric Tons)

## VARIETY OF COMMODITIES

Varieties	From American Sources	Purchased and Transported by the A.R.A. from Funds of the Russian Republics	Total
Cocoa .....	2,477	1,445	2,922
Sugar .....	1,388	7,436	20,524
Milk .....	42,411	544	42,955
Flour .....	91,212	38,746	129,958
Peas & Beans .....	3,481	4,229	7,710
Rice .....	12,401	5,667	18,068
Corn Grits .....	91,590	.....	91,590
Fats .....	8,572	3,660	12,232
Misc. Foods .....	1,267	.....	1,267
Seed Wheat .....	35,713	101,321	137,034
Seed Corn .....	18,294	4	18,298
No. 2 Mixed Corn.	201,395	.....	201,395
Seed Rye .....	18,243	3,810	22,053
Oats, Forage .....	.....	2,359	2,359
Seed Grass .....	.....	142	142
Sub-Total, All Foods	540,144	169,363	709,507
Soap .....	275	326	601
Medical Supplies ..	6,478	.....	6,478
Clothing, & Misc...	2,184	.....	2,184
Total, All Commodities.	549,081	169,689	718,770

TABLE III

RELIEF FURNISHED TO RUSSIA THROUGH THE AMERICAN RELIEF  
ADMINISTRATION

(Net Metric Tons)

## BY DISTRICTS

District	Quantity
Alexandrovsk .....	9,227
Batum .....	255
Ekaterinoslav .....	14,817
Elizabethgrad .....	1,717
Gomel .....	3,014
Kazan .....	81,660
Kharkov .....	5,525
Kiev .....	16,362
Mariupol .....	1,983
Minsk .....	6,130
Moscow .....	16,410
Nikolaiev .....	4,665
Novorossisk .....	1,068
Odessa .....	26,357
Orenburg .....	50,269
Petrograd .....	10,317
Rostov/Don-Tzaritzin .....	101,441
Samara .....	43,018
Saratov .....	73,540
Simbirsk .....	40,944
Simferopol .....	7,170
Ufa .....	51,642
Theodosia .....	7,468
Tiflis .....	2,576
Vitebsk .....	4,234
Not segregated .....	125,929
Near East Relief .....	11,032
<b>TOTAL</b> .....	<b>718,770</b>

TABLE

NUMBERS OF PERSONS FED DAILY BY THE

Year	Month	Moscow	Petrograd	Kazan	Samara	Saratov	Simbirsk
1921	September.	{ ..... .....	200 .....	..... .....	..... .....	..... .....	..... .....
	October ..	{ ..... .....	200 .....	67,290 .....	1,108 .....	..... .....	..... .....
	November.	{ 905 .....	35,100 1,200	105,508 .....	36,381 .....	1,280 .....	2,499 171
	December .	{ 13,514 .....	35,137 1,628	156,743 .....	185,625 .....	82,010 .....	59,235 837
1922	January ..	{ 32,080 .....	34,138 1,550	201,662 4,720	252,300 .....	146,062 .....	165,158 .....
	February .	{ 34,491 .....	34,549 204	301,075 4,720	257,994 .....	173,979 .....	201,908 .....
	March ...	{ 36,635 .....	35,075 1,293	338,665 4,720	298,651 .....	186,998 176	238,244 2,575
	April ....	{ 35,869 .....	36,955 3,029	339,705 4,720	329,756 .....	185,256 55,618	244,226 2,758
	May .....	{ 36,798 9,655	35,601 3,757	361,383 197,022	347,690 561,321	199,428 468,211	264,565 373,261
	June .....	{ 40,678 14,747	32,875 6,776	508,384 791,530	440,218 770,688	287,093 738,662	323,441 397,898
	July .....	{ 36,094 18,863	35,602 5,519	664,174 1,089,014	433,801 789,749	332,611 748,803	386,494 404,775
	August ...	{ 42,117 16,511	36,639 5,815	700,638 1,093,329	477,653 811,681	338,023 529,231	390,759 292,007
	September.	{ 41,570 16,669	41,983 3,985	462,683 818,164	333,357 813,386	303,076 553,118	403,622 301,227
	October ..	{ 34,950 7,685	36,751 4,338	148,045 4,611	94,422 934	5,948 51,481	120,401 2,413
	November.	{ 27,971 9,100	38,829 4,508	133,461 4,318	97,368 1,268	8,666 6,043	57,980 2,337
	December .	{ 33,503 10,149	30,665 4,585	141,988 4,720	113,070 1,739	51,057 4,444	74,336 1,943
1923	January ..	{ 32,177 10,542	27,608 2,510	156,433 4,937	80,173 1,531	119,980 4,878	76,421 2,113
	February .	{ 32,507 11,061	29,767 2,803	169,009 4,806	88,969 1,601	121,909 4,912	92,958 2,243
	March ...	{ 33,272 11,944	30,902 10,983	253,824 5,666	146,478 2,043	159,458 4,260	122,208 2,427
	April ....	{ 32,895 14,604	36,114 13,655	392,722 6,505	160,052 3,169	201,762 4,425	164,088 2,512
	May .....	{ 35,171 14,743	35,746 11,401	543,399 7,179	185,092 4,319	219,032 4,246	199,806 4,297
	June .....	{ 35,291 14,556	35,835 11,477	642,096 7,486	193,111 4,368	273,066 5,762	255,001 4,370

<sup>1</sup>Two figures are given for each month. The upper figure represents the



V

## AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION IN RUSSIA

Rostov Tzaritzin	Ufa	Orenburg	Crimea	Minsk Vitebsk Gomel	Ukraine	Total <sup>1</sup>	Grand Total
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	200}	200
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....}	
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	68,598}	68,598
2,288	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	183,961}	
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,371}	185,332
8,500	17,732	7,059	.....	.....	.....	565,555}	
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	2,465}	568,020
80,000	34,000	46,751	.....	.....	.....	992,151}	
.....	.....	1,194	.....	.....	.....	7,464}	999,615
111,732	90,349	106,950	.....	.....	.....	1,313,027}	
.....	.....	3,000	.....	.....	.....	7,924}	1,320,951
139,550	135,037	140,083	.....	.....	.....	1,548,938}	
.....	.....	945	.....	.....	.....	9,709}	1,558,647
201,932	144,624	221,645	.....	.....	.....	1,739,968}	
352,225	260,294	3,151	.....	.....	.....	681,795}	2,421,763
246,117	158,469	340,450	.....	.....	7,000	1,997,501}	
432,271	473,570	474,660	.....	.....	.....	2,993,728}	4,991,229
346,673	281,624	330,345	.....	.....	230,000	2,821,331}	
489,770	619,450	666,112	.....	5,017	.....	4,500,660}	7,321,991
434,816	393,985	326,620	.....	2,000	566,977	3,613,174}	
609,102	648,988	668,832	95,300	7,500	267,273	5,353,718}	8,968,892
358,871	504,989	339,508	3,100	2,100	978,942	4,173,339}	
612,517	1,021,727	860,041	91,000	8,527	975,572	6,317,958}	10,490,297
197,590	521,767	335,615	43,269	1,520	609,844	3,295,896}	
233,602	1,074,595	788,808	92,000	6,115	303,499	5,005,168}	8,301,064
108,519	38,601	231,387	56,047	5,025	206,809	1,086,905}	
2,032	7,225	4,950	2,119	7,621	8,429	103,838}	6,092,073
40,650	59,960	.....	61,089	3,650	213,919	743,453}	
2,417	10,040	.....	1,671	6,325	14,023	62,050}	805,503
53,602	63,361	.....	31,756	19,587	218,455	832,380}	
2,249	11,639	.....	1,745	6,184	14,112	63,509}	895,889
40,902	86,668	.....	44,267	19,887	234,701	919,217}	
1,728	9,518	.....	3,433	5,856	16,734	63,780}	982,997
79,554	114,777	.....	46,396	21,466	239,116	1,036,428}	
4,533	10,023	.....	3,174	5,900	16,000	67,146}	1,103,574
113,060	177,853	13,920	69,506	23,170	298,504	1,442,155}	
3,297	9,986	.....	3,077	6,450	.....	78,005}	1,520,160
125,709	236,061	139,825	118,105	23,671	402,488	2,033,492}	
4,176	27,808	15,740	6,758	6,206	15,800	121,358}	2,154,850
150,982	291,506	172,585	132,254	23,610	494,842	2,484,025}	
4,165	28,635	23,855	13,952	6,354	15,881	139,027}	2,623,052
153,472	370,040	175,890	92,575	32,904	508,317	2,767,598}	
4,308	30,506	24,275	9,956	7,969	17,194	142,227}	2,909,825

number of children fed, and the lower the number of adults supplied.

TABLE V

(Section A)

## MOVEMENT OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES TO RUSSIA

*Shipped, Transported and Distributed by the American Relief Administration,  
Furnished by the American Red Cross and from the United States  
Government Appropriation of Surplus Medical Stocks.*

## SHIPPED FROM THE UNITED STATES

Month	Year	Number of Bales, Boxes, Barrels		
		American Red Cross	U. S. Army Supplies	Total
October .....	1921	148		148
November .....				
December .....	1922	5,332		5,332
January .....		2,574		2,574
February .....		5,992		5,992
March .....		5,157	436	5,593
April .....	1923	2,310	20,179	22,489
May .....		102	23,415	23,517
June .....		8,238	12,560	20,798
July .....		1,287		1,287
August .....		877		877
September .....		6,167		6,167
October .....		284		284
November .....		1,792		1,792
December .....		2,694	482	3,176
January .....		3,696		3,696
February .....		1,855		1,855
March .....		4,033		4,033
April .....		298		298
TOTAL .....		52,836	57,072	109,908
Foreign Purchases .....		1,334		1,334
From Stocks in Coblenz .....			8,475	8,475
GRAND TOTAL, Bales, Boxes Barrels .....		54,170	65,547	119,717
SHIPPED FROM THE UNITED STATES		\$2,291,072.54	\$3,442,862.87	\$5,733,935.41
Foreign Purchases .....		1,513,790.61		1,513,790.61
From Stocks in Coblenz .....			347,405.50	347,405.50
To Near East Relief for South- ern Russia .....			209,731.63	209,731.63
Freight, etc., Paid from Funds Specially Contributed .....			267,392.88	267,392.88
GRAND TOTAL .....		*\$3,804,863.15	\$4,267,392.88	\$8,072,256.03

\* Of this the American Red Cross appropriated \$3,754,587.38. The balance, \$50,275.77, was supplied by the A.R.A. from funds recovered on U. S. Government supplies and Red Cross shipments.

TABLE V  
(Section B)  
MOVEMENT OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES IN RUSSIA  
*Receipts and Shipments of Cars and Cases into Moscow and from Moscow*  
MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Month	Year	American Red Cross Medical Supplies				U. S. Army Surplus Medical Supplies			
		Received		Shipped		Received		Shipped	
		Cars	Cases	Cars	Cases	Cars	Cases	Cars	Cases
October	1921	21	3,264	4	640	...	.....	...	.....
November		2	358	7	1,152	...	.....	...	.....
December		13	1,856	10	1,426	...	.....	...	.....
January	1922	8	1,111	16	2,559	...	.....	...	.....
February		30	3,460	23	3,422	...	.....	...	.....
March		8	1,752	18	2,183	...	.....	...	.....
April		56	8,994	49	7,467	...	.....	...	.....
May		43	8,010	26	4,792	26	3,836	...	.....
June		56	6,900	40	5,571	181	31,309	106	19,797
July		55	6,068	65	7,572	126	21,138	86	16,277
August		82	6,604	58	4,346	44	7,550	43	7,221
September		43	5,192	64	7,282	4	456	39	5,278
October		20	1,874	20	1,803	...	.....	33	4,101
November		15	827	10	741	...	3	8	968
December		20	2,530	24	2,540	...	.....	41	6,590
January	1923	29	5,000	19	2,503	3	166	20	1,717
February		27	2,201	17	2,568	2	314	16	1,181
March		21	3,478	53	8,999	...	2	6	1,656
April		30	4,590	35	5,979	...	.....	...	.....
TOTAL		579	74,069	558	73,545	386	64,774	398	64,846
U. S. Army Surplus Supplies		386	64,774	398	64,846				
GRAND TOTAL		965	138,843	956	138,391				



**TABLE V**  
(Section C)  
**DISTRIBUTION OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES IN RUSSIA**  
*Number of Institutions in Russia Supplied Each Month by the A.R.A.*

Month	Year	Hospitals & Sana- toriums	Ambula- tories	Childrens' Homes	Day Nurseries	Schools	Homes for the Aged	Other In- stitutions	Total Number of Institutions	Total Capacity (Persons)
November	1921	28	...	8	..	..	...	...	36	4,778
December	1921	306	8	20	1	..	...	...	335	35,944
January	1922	272	157	143	12	..	10	6	600	52,121
February		450	91	297	22	3	7	13	883	83,868
March		488	317	252	62	6	13	18	1,156	80,166
April		561	222	291	16	8	34	16	1,148	133,171
May		800	362	620	50	6	27	39	1,904	183,669
June		1,093	508	613	120	36	41	55	2,466	211,179
July		1,663	818	662	86	46	25	170	3,470	254,220
August		1,837	1,477	892	31	25	55	470	4,787	318,076
September		782	648	651	44	38	24	155	2,342	146,988
October		973	527	1,308	77	29	24	83	3,021	212,596
November		928	475	534	33	35	18	118	2,141	217,845
December		759	448	985	55	26	33	98	2,404	227,272
January	1923	751	638	574	59	32	32	77	2,163	182,310
February		918	810	767	77	59	17	141	2,789	234,726
March		948	995	881	54	34	22	170	3,104	205,629
April		1,628	973	1,026	21	62	52	410	4,172	430,469
May		799	405	472	3	22	5	166	1,872	296,790

## APPENDIX C

### AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

#### PERSONNEL

DURING RUSSIAN OPERATIONS, 1921-23

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EDWIN P. SHATTUCK, <i>Counsel</i>	W. GORDON BROWN, <i>Purchasing and Insurance</i>
WILLIAM B. POLAND, <sup>1</sup> <i>Technical Adviser</i>	J. W. KRUEGER, <i>Purchasing and Medical Supplies</i>
DR. ALONZO E. TAYLOR, <i>Nutritional Adviser</i>	ARTHUR T. DAILEY, <i>Assistant Secretary</i>

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EDWIN SHERMAN, <i>Executive Assistant</i>	ELISE I. SPROTT, <i>Supplies and Shipping</i>
	R. L. BLAND, <i>Supply Programs</i>

<sup>1</sup> Member of A.R.A. Executive Committee.

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Symbols are explained in footnote on page 562.

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Symbols are explained in footnote on page 562.

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### EDITOR'S NOTE

This extensive compilation was prepared by Marietta Fuller and W. H. Meserole in response to a demand from writers, teachers, students and lecturers for information on specific phases of the American famine relief in Russia. The original documents are in the archives of the American Relief Administration at Stanford University, California.

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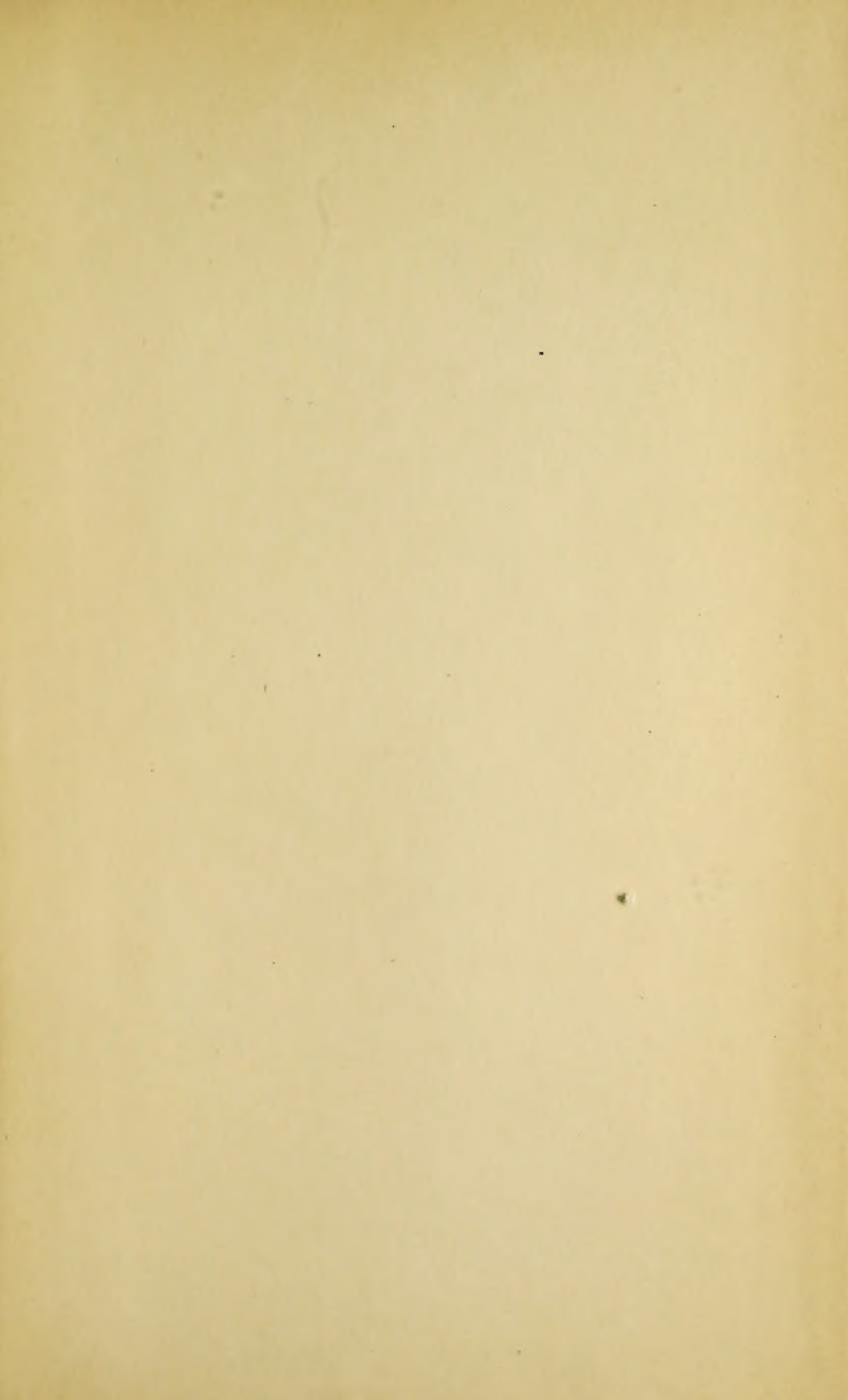
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